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A

COMPENDIOUS HISTORY

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE,

AND OF

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE,

FROM

The Norman Conquest.

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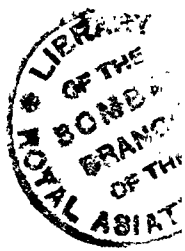

WITH NUMEROUS SPECIMENS.

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BY

GEORGE L. CRAIK, LL.D.,

PROFESSOR OF HISTORY AND OF ENGLISH LITERATURE IN QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BELFAST.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

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CORRECTIONS.

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Page 17, line 28; *for* "in prison" *read* "from prison."
„ 32, line 13; *for* "eighty" *read* "seventy."
„ 41, line 5 from foot; *for* "Churchhill" *read* "Churchill."
„ 73, line 7; *for* "Heptaglotten" *read* "Heptaglotton."
„ 105, line 14 from foot; and p. 106, lines 5 and 16; *for* "Etheridge" *read* "Etherege."
„ 105, line 13 from foot; and p. 106, lines 9, 10, and 17; *for* "Wycherly" *read* "Wycherley."
„ 120, line 28; *for* "Milton's" *read* "Bunyan's."
„ 147, line 31; p. 149, line 12; p. 150, lines 24 and 25; p. 151, line 5 from foot; p. 152, line 17; and p. 174, line 7 from foot; *for* "Spratt" *read* "Sprat."
„ 172, line 22; *for* "Etheredge" *read* "Etherege."
„ 279, line 21; *for* "Her" *read* "His."
„ 334, line 3 from foot; *dele* "known to be."
„ 431, line 1; *dele* "published."
„ 432, line 5; *after* "published" *add* "anonymously."
„ 468, line 3; *for* "stanzas" *read* "stanza."
„ 537, line 14; *for* "eight" *read* "six."

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HISTORY

OF

ENGLISH LITERATURE.

Middle and Latter Part of the Seventeenth Century.

Excluding from our view the productions of the last fifty or sixty years, as not yet ripe for the verdict of history, we may affirm that our national literature, properly so called, that is, whatever of our literature by right of its poetic shape or spirit is to be held as peculiarly belonging to the language and the country, had its noonday in the period comprehending the last quarter of the sixteenth and the first of the seventeenth century. But a splendid afternoon flush succeeded this meridian blaze, which may be said to have lasted for another half century, or longer. Down almost to the Revolution, or at least to the middle of the reign of Charles II., our higher literature continued to glow with more or less of the coloured light and the heart of fire which it had acquired in the age of Elizabeth and James. Some of the greatest of it indeed—as the verse of Milton and the prose poetry of Jeremy Taylor—was not given to the world till towards the close of the space we have just indicated. But Milton, and Taylor, and Sir Thomas Browne, and Cudworth, and Henry More, and Cowley, the most eminent of our English writers in the interval from the Restoration to the Revolution (if we except Dryden, the founder of a new school, and Barrow, whose writings, full as they are of thought, have not much of the poetical or untranslatable) were all of them, it is worthy of observation, born before the close of the reign of James I. Nor

would the stormy time that followed be without its nurture for such minds. A boyhood or youth passed in the days of Shakespeare and Bacon, and a manhood in those of the Great Rebellion, was a training which could not fail to rear high powers to their highest capabilities.

Shirley, and the End of the Old Drama.

The chief glory of our Elizabethan literature, however, belongs almost exclusively to the time we have already gone over. The only other name that remains to be mentioned to complete our sketch of the great age of the Drama, is that of James Shirley, who was born about the year 1594, and whose first play, the comedy of The Wedding, was published in 1629. He is the author of about forty dramatic pieces which have come down to us. "Shirley," observes Lamb, "claims a place among the worthies of this period, not so much for any transcendent genius in himself, as that he was the last of a great race, all of whom spoke nearly the same language, and had a set of moral feelings and notions in common. A new language and quite a new turn of tragic and comic interest came in with the Restoration."* Of this writer, who survived till 1666, the merits and defects have been well stated, in a few comprehensive words, by Mr. Hallam:—"Shirley has no originality, no force in conceiving or delineating character, little of pathos, and less, perhaps, of wit; his dramas produce no deep impression in reading, and of course can leave none in the memory. But his mind was poetical: his better characters, especially females, express pure thoughts in pure language; he is never tumid or affected, and seldom obscure; the incidents succeed rapidly; the personages are numerous, and there is a general animation in the scenes, which causes us to read him with some pleasure."†

A preface by Shirley is prefixed to the first collection of part of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, which, as already mentioned, appeared in 1647. "Now, reader," he says, "in this tragical age, where the theatre hath been so much outacted, congratulate thy own happiness that, in this silence of the stage, thou hast a liberty to read these inimitable plays,—to dwell and

* Specimens, ii. 119. † Lit. of Eur. iii. 345.

converse in these immortal groves,—which were only showed our fathers in a conjuring-glass, as suddenly removed as represented." At this time all theatrical amusements were prohibited; and the publication of these and of other dramatic productions which were their property, or rather the sale of them to the booksellers, was resorted to by the players as a way of making a little money when thus cut off from the regular gains of their profession; the eagerness of the public to possess the said works in print being of course also sharpened by the same cause. Before the commencement of the civil war there appear to have been no fewer than five different companies of public players in London:—1. That called the King's Company (the same that Shakespeare had belonged to), which acted at the Globe, on the Bankside in Southwark, in the summer, and at the Blackfriars Theatre in winter. 2. The Queen's Players, who occupied the Cockpit (or the Phœnix, as it was also called), in Drury Lane, the origin of the Theatre Royal there. 3. The Prince's Players, who played at the Fortune Theatre, in Golden or Golding Lane, in the parish of St. Giles, Cripplegate. 4. The Salisbury Court Company. 5. The Children of the Revels, who are supposed to have performed at the theatre called the Red Bull, at the upper end of St. John's Street. It had been usual to shut up the theatres when the plague was in London, with the view of preventing such concourses of people as it was thought might help to spread the disease, and on such occasions the players were wont to go down and act in the provinces; but their absence from town when protracted beyond a few weeks was very impatiently borne. In May, 1636, when the plague was raging with great violence, an order was issued by the privy council, forbidding the representation of all "stage-plays, interludes, shows, and spectacles;" and the prohibition was not removed till the end of February in the following year. In the mean time, it appears, the craving of the public for their customary enjoyment, in one shape if not in another, had tempted certain booksellers to print a number of plays, surreptitiously procured, as we learn from an edict of the lord chamberlain, addressed to the Stationers' Company, in June, 1637, in which he states that complaints to that effect had been made to him by the players, the legal proprietors of those "books of comedies, tragedies, interludes, histories, and the like, which they had (for the special service of his majesty and for their own use) bought and provided at very dear

and high rates." The players added, that, by these unfair publications, "not only they themselves had much prejudice, but the books much corruption, to the injury and disgrace of the authors."* At this time the most favourite acting plays were in general carefully withheld from the press by the theatrical companies whose property they were; and the only way in which a perusal of them could be obtained was by paying a considerable sum for a loan of the manuscript or a transcript of it. Humphrey Moseley, the publisher of the collection of Beaumont and Fletcher's plays in 1647, after observing in his prefatory address, that his charges in bringing out the volume had been very great, seeing that the owners of the manuscripts too well knew their value to make a cheap estimate of any of them, adds, "Heretofore, when gentlemen desired but a copy of any of these plays, the meanest piece here (if any may be called mean where every one is best) cost them more than four times the price you pay for the whole volume." The missing comedy of The Wild Goose Chase had been lost, he tells us in another passage, by being borrowed from the actors many years before by a person of quality, and, owing to the neglect of a servant, never returned. Sometimes, too, it appears from another of his remarks, an individual actor would write out his part for a private friend, or probably for any one who would pay him for it.

The permanent suppression of theatrical entertainments was the act of the Long Parliament. An ordinance of the Lords and Commons passed on the 2nd of September, 1642,—after setting forth that "public sports do not well agree with public calamities, nor public stage-plays with the seasons of humiliation, this being an exercise of sad and pious solemnity, and the other being spectacles of pleasure, too commonly expressing lascivious mirth and levity,"—ordained, "that, while these sad causes and set times of humiliation do continue, public stage-plays shall cease and be forborne." It has been plausibly conjectured that this measure originated, "not merely in a spirit of religious dislike to dramatic performances, but in a politic caution, lest playwriters and players should avail themselves of their power over the minds of the people to instil notions and opinions hostile to the authority of a puritanical parliament."† This ordinance cer-

* See the edict in Chalmers's Apology for the Believers in the Shakespeare Papers, p. 513.

† Collier, Hist. Dram. Poet. ii. 106.

tainly put an end at once to the regular performance of plays; but it is known to have been occasionally infringed; and there is reason to believe that after a few years it began to be pretty frequently and openly disregarded. This would appear to have been the case from a new ordinance of the Lords and Commons published in October, 1647, entitled, "For the better suppression of stage-plays, interludes, and common players," by which the lord mayor, justices of the peace, and sheriffs of the city of London and Westminster, and of the counties of Middlesex and Surrey, were authorized and required to enter into all houses and other places within their jurisdiction where stage-plays were acted, and to seize the players and commit them for trial at the next sessions, "there to be punished as rogues, according to law." On the 22nd of January following, however, the House of Commons was informed that many stage-plays were still acted in various places in the city of London and in the county of Middlesex, notwithstanding this ordinance. The subject was then taken up with furious zeal both by Commons and Lords; and, after a great bustle of message-sending, debating, and consulting in committees, an act was agreed upon and published on the 11th of February, 1648, which, after declaring stage-plays, interludes, and common plays to be "condemned by ancient heathens, and much less to be tolerated amongst professors of the Christian religion," and denouncing them as being "the occasion of many and sundry great vices and disorders, tending to the high provocation of God's wrath and displeasure, which lies heavy upon this kingdom, and to the disturbance of the peace thereof," proceeded to ordain—first, that all players should be taken to be rogues within the meaning of the statutes of the 39th of Elizabeth and 7th of James; secondly, that the authorities of the city of London and counties of Middlesex and Surrey should "pull down and demolish, or cause and procure to be pulled down and demolished, all stage-galleries, seats, and boxes, erected or used, or which shall be erected or used, for the acting or playing, or seeing acted or played," any species of theatrical performance within their jurisdictions; thirdly, that convicted players should be punished for the first offence with open and public whipping, and, for the second, should be dealt with according to law as incorrigible rogues; fourthly, that all the money collected from the spectators of any stage-plays should be seized for the use of the poor of the parish; and, lastly, that every person present at any

such performance should forfeit the sum of five shillings to the use of the poor. Even this severe measure was not perfectly effectual; for, in the following September, we find the House of Commons appointing a provost-marshal, with authority, among other things, "to seize upon all ballad-singers and sellers of malignant pamphlets, and to send them to the several militias, and to suppress stage-plays." And, more than a year after this, namely, in December, 1649, it is noted by Whitelock that "some stage-players in St. John's Street were apprehended by troopers, their clothes taken away, and themselves carried to prison." It appears, also, that in some of the country parts of the kingdom strolling players continued for some years to set the law at defiance, and to be connived at in their disregard of it. At so late a date as February, 1654, it is recorded that plays were performed by a company of strollers at Witney and other places in Oxfordshire.* It is, perhaps, more probable, however, that the statute had only in course of time come to be less rigidly enforced, than that it had been thus violated from the first. We are informed by the historians of the stage, that, though the public exhibition of stage-plays in London was effectually put down by the act of 1648, yet the players "still kept together, and, by connivance of the commanding officer at Whitehall, sometimes represented privately a few plays at a short distance from town." They also, it is added, were permitted to act at the country houses of some of the nobility; and even obtained leave at particular festivals to resume their public performances at the Red Bull. Finally, we are told, "amidst the gloom of fanaticism, and whilst the Royal cause was considered as desperate, Sir William Davenant, without molestation, exhibited entertainments of declamation and music, after the manner of the ancients, at Rutland House. He began in the year 1656, and two years afterwards removed to the Cockpit, Drury Lane, where he performed until the eve of the Restoration."† Rutland House was in Charter House Square; and it is said that Davenant's performances there were countenanced by Whitelock, Sir John Maynard, and other

* See the facts connected with the shutting of the theatres for the first time accurately stated in Mr. Collier's History, ii. 104—119.

† View of the Rise and Progress of the English Stage, prefixed to Reed's edition of Baker's Biographia Dramatica, p. xxii. Mr. Collier (ii. 119) says:—"The performance of Davenant's 'opera,' as he himself calls it, of The Siege of Rhodes, in 1656, is to be looked upon as the first step towards the revival of dramatic performances."

persons of influence. At first he called his representations operas; but at length growing bolder, it is affirmed, he wrote and caused to be acted several regular plays.*

GILES FLETCHER; PHINEAS FLETCHER.

Nor is the poetical produce other than dramatic of the quarter of a century that elapsed from the death of James to the establishment of the Commonwealth, of very considerable amount. Giles and Phineas Fletcher were brothers, cousins of the dramatist, and both clergymen. Giles, who died in 1623, is the author of a poem entitled Christ's Victory and Triumph in Heaven and Earth over and after Death, which was published in a quarto volume in 1610. It is divided into four parts, and is written in stanzas somewhat like those of Spenser, only containing eight lines each instead of nine: both the Fletchers, indeed, were professed disciples and imitators of the great author of the Fairy Queen. Phineas, who survived till 1650, published in 1633, along with a small collection of Piscatory Eclogues and other Poetical Miscellanies, a long allegorical poem, entitled The Purple Island, in twelve Books or Cantos, written in a stanza of seven lines. The idea upon which this performance is founded is one of the most singular that ever took possession of the brain even of an allegorist: the *purple island* is nothing else than the human body, and the poem is, in fact, for the greater part, a system of anatomy, nearly as minute in its details as if it were a scientific treatise, but wrapping up everything in a fantastic guise of double meaning, so as to produce a languid sing-song of laborious riddles, which are mostly unintelligible without the very knowledge they make a pretence of conveying. After he has finished his anatomical course, the author takes up the subject of psychology, which he treats in the same luminous and interesting manner. Such a work as this has no claim to be considered a poem even of the same sort with the Fairy Queen. In Spenser, the allegory, whether historical or moral, is little more than formal: the poem, taken in its natural and obvious import, as a tale of "knights' and ladies' gentle deeds"—a song of their "fierce wars and faithful loves"—has meaning and interest

* Biog. Dram. ii. 15.

enough, without the allegory at all, which, indeed, except in a very few passages, is so completely concealed behind the direct narrative, that we may well suppose it to have been nearly as much lost sight of and forgotten by the poet himself as it is by his readers: here, the allegory is the soul of every stanza and of every line—that which gives to the whole work whatever meaning, and consequently whatever poetry, it possesses—with which, indeed, it is sometimes hard enough to be understood, but without which it would be absolute inanity and nonsense. The Purple Island is rather a production of the same species with Dr. Darwin's Botanic Garden; but, forced and false enough as Darwin's style is in many respects, it would be doing an injustice to his poem to compare it with Phineas Fletcher's, either in regard to the degree in which nature and propriety are violated in the principle and manner of the composition, or in regard to the spirit and general success of the execution. Of course, there is a good deal of ingenuity shown in Fletcher's poem; and it is not unimpregnated by poetic feeling, nor without some passages of considerable merit. But in many other parts it is quite grotesque; and, on the whole, it is fantastic, puerile, and wearisome. Mr. Hallam thinks that Giles Fletcher, in his poem of Christ's Victory and Triumph, has shown more vigour than Phineas,* "but less sweetness, less smoothness, and more affectation in his style."† It ought to be mentioned, however, to the honour of these two writers, that the works of both of them appear to have been studied by Milton, and that imitations of some passages in each are to be traced in his poetry. Milton was undoubtedly a diligent reader of the English poetry of the age preceding his own; and his predecessors of all degrees, Ben Jonson and Fletcher the dramatists, as well as the two cousins of the latter, and, as we have seen, Joshua Sylvester and the earlier dramatic writer, George Peele, had contributed something to the awakening or directing of his feeling for the grand and beautiful, and to the forming of his melodious and lofty note.

* Called by mistake, his *elder* brother.
† Lit. of Eur. iii. 252.

Other Religious Poets:—Quarles; Herbert; Herrick; Crashaw.

The growth of the religious spirit in the early part of the seventeenth century is shown in much more of the poetry of the time as well as in that of the two Fletchers. Others of the most notable names of this age are Quarles, Herrick, Herbert, and Crashaw. Francis Quarles, who died in 1644, was one of the most popular as well as voluminous writers of the day, and is still generally known by his volume of Emblems. His verses are characterized by ingenuity rather than fancy, but, although often absurd, he is seldom dull or languid. There is a good deal of spirit and coarse vigour in some of his pieces, as for instance in his well-known Song of Anarchus, portions of which have been printed both by Ellis and Campbell, and which may perhaps have suggested to Cowper, the great religious poet of a later day, his lines called The Modern Patriot. Quarles, however, though he appears to have been a person of considerable literary acquirement, must in his poetical capacity be regarded as mainly a writer for the populace. George Herbert, a younger brother of the celebrated Edward Lord Herbert of Cherbury, was a clergyman. His volume, entitled The Temple, was first published soon after his death in 1633, and was at least six or seven times reprinted in the course of the next quarter of a century. His biographer, Izaak Walton, tell us that when he wrote, in the reign of Charles II., twenty thousand copies of it had been sold. Herbert was an intimate friend of Donne, and no doubt a great admirer of his poetry; but his own has been to a great extent preserved from the imitation of Donne's peculiar style, into which it might in other circumstances have fallen, in all probability by its having been composed with little effort or elaboration, and chiefly to relieve and amuse his own mind by the melodious expression of his favourite fancies and contemplations. His quaintness lies in his thoughts rather than in their expression, which is in general sufficiently simple and luminous. Robert Herrick, who was also a clergyman, is the author of a thick octavo volume of verse, published in 1648, under the title of Hesperides. It consists, like the poetry of Donne, partly of love verses, partly of pieces of a devotional character, or, as the two sorts are styled in the title-page, Works Human and Divine.

The same singular licence which even the most reverend persons, and the purest and most religious minds, in that age allowed themselves to take in light and amatory poetry is found in Herrick as well as in Donne, a good deal of whose singular manner, and fondness for conceits both of sound and sense, Herrick has also caught. Yet some both of his hymns and of his anacreontics—for of such strange intermixture does his poetry consist—are beautifully simple and natural, and full of grace as well as fancy.* Richard Crashaw was another clergyman, who late in life became a Roman Catholic, and died a canon of Loretto in 1650. He is perhaps, after Donne, the greatest of these religious poets of the early part of the seventeenth century. He belongs in manner to the same school with Donne and Herrick, and in his lighter pieces he has much of their lyrical sweetness and delicacy; but there is often a force and even occasionally what may be called a grandeur of imagination in his more solemn poetry which Herrick never either reaches or aspires to.†

Cartwright; Randolph; Corbet.

All the poetical clergymen of this time, however, had not such pious muses. The Rev. William Cartwright, who died at an early age in 1643, is said by Anthony Wood to have been "a most florid and seraphic preacher;" but his poetry, which is mostly amatory, is not remarkable for its brilliancy. He is the author of several plays, and he was one of the young writers who were honoured with the title of his sons by Ben Jonson, who said of him, "My son Cartwright writes all like a man." Another of Ben's poetical sons was Thomas Randolph, who was likewise a clergyman, and is also the author of several plays,

* A complete reprint of the Hesperides was brought out at Edinburgh, under the care of Mr. Maitland, in 2 vols. 8vo. in 1823; and there are also London reprints of later date. A small selection from Herrick's poetry, in one volume, had been published in London before the appearance of the complete Edinburgh edition.

† Upon the subject of these and other religious poets of the seventeenth century, see Lives of Sacred Poets, by the Rev. Robert Aris Willmott, 12mo. Lon. 1834; and an article on The Character and Progress of Religious Poetry, in the Church of England Quarterly Review for January, 1837, No. I. pp. 171—229.

mostly in verse, as well as of a quantity of other poetry. Randolph has a good deal of fancy, and his verse flows very melodiously; but his poetry has in general a bookish and borrowed air. Much of it is on subjects of love and gallantry; but the love is chiefly of the head, or, at most, of the senses—the gallantry, it is easy to see, that merely of a fellow of a college and a reader of Ovid. Randolph died under thirty in 1634, and his poems were first collected after his death by his brother. The volume, which also contains his Plays, was frequently reprinted in the course of the next thirty or forty years; the edition before us, dated 1668, is called the fifth.

One of the most remarkable among the clerical poets of this earlier half of the seventeenth century was Dr. Richard Corbet, successively Bishop of Oxford and of Norwich. Corbet, who was born in 1582, became famous both as a poet and as a wit early in the reign of James; but very little, if any, of his poetry was published till after his death, which took place in 1635. The first edition of his Poems appeared in 1647, and there were others in 1648 and 1672; but the most complete collection of what he has left us is that published by the late Octavius Gilchrist in 1807. A notion of what sort of man Bishop Corbet was may be gathered from some anecdotes of him preserved by Aubrey, who relates, among other things, that after he was a doctor of divinity he sang ballads at the Cross at Abingdon: "On a market day," Aubrey writes, "he and some of his comrades were at the tavern by the Cross (which, by the way, was then the finest in England; I remember it when I was a freshman; it was admirable curious Gothic architecture, and fine figures in the niches; 'twas one of those built by King .... for his Queen). The ballad-singer complained he had no custom —he could not put off his ballads. The jolly doctor puts off his gown, and puts on the ballad-singer's leathern jacket, and, being a handsome man, and a rare full voice, he presently vended a great many, and had a great audience." Aubrey had heard, however, that as a bishop "he had an admirable grave and venerable aspect." Corbet's poetry, too, is a mixture or alternation of gravity and drollery. But it is the subject or occasion, rather than the style or manner, that makes the difference; he never rises to anything higher than wit; and he is as witty in his elegies as in his ballads. As that ingredient, however, is not so suitable for the former as for the latter, his graver per-

formances are worth very little. Nor is his merriment of a high order; when it is most elaborate it is strained and fantastic, and when more natural it is apt to run into buffoonery. But much of his verse, indeed, is merely prose in rhyme, and very indifferent rhyme for the most part. His happiest effusions are the two that are best known, his Journey into France and his ballad of The Fairies' Farewell. His longest and most curious poem is his Iter Boreale, describing a journey which he took in company with other three university men, probably about 1620, from Oxford as far north as Newark and back again. Two lines in this piece might almost pass for having suggested Byron's couplet in Don Juan,

> Let not a monument give you or me hopes,
> Since not a pinch of dust remains of Cheops:

Corbet, moralizing upon the tombless grave of Wolsey at Leicester, exclaims:—

> If thou art thus neglected, what shall we
> Hope after death, who are but shreds of thee?

At a village near Loughborough our travellers were obliged to procure a guide to conduct them through the intricacies of that unknown country to Bosworth; and next morning the landlord of the inn in which they passed the night in the latter town mounted his horse and accompanied them to the neighbouring battle-field. Then comes a passage of some interest:—

> Mine host was full of ale and history;
> And on the morrow, when he brought us nigh
> Where the two Roses joined, you would suppose
> Chaucer ne'er made the Romaunt of the Rose.
> Hear him—'See ye yon wood? There Richard lay
> With his whole army: look the other way,
> And to where Richmond in a bed of gorse
> Encamped himself ere night, and all his force.
> Upon this hill they met.' Why, he could tell
> The inch where Richmond stood, where Richard fell.
> Beside what of his knowledge he could say,
> He had authentic notice from the play;
> Which I might guess by his mustering up the ghosts
> And policies not incident to hosts;
> But chiefly by that one perspicuous thing,
> Where he mistook a player for a king;
> For when he would have said, King Richard died,
> And called—A horse! a horse! he Burbage cried.

From this passage we learn, not only, as has been remarked, that Shakespeare's Richard III. was originally represented by the famous fellow-actor of the poet, Richard Burbage, but also that both the play and the performers were already familiarly known in the country as well as in London. It may be supposed indeed that the town of Bosworth would be one of the first places in which this particular drama was represented out of the metropolis.

As a sample of Corbet's humour, we may give his description of the landlady of their inn at Warwick :—

Oh, there an hostess was,
To whom the Castle and the Dun Cow are
Sights after dinner; she is morning ware.
Her whole behaviour borrowed was and mixed,
Half fool, half puppet, and her face betwixt
Measure and jig; her curtsey was an honour;
Her gait, as if her neighbour had outgone her.
She was barred up in whalebones, which did leese
None of the whale's length, for they reached her knees.
Off with her head, and then she hath a middle:
As her waist stands she looks like the new fiddle,
The favourite Theorbo, truth to tell ye,
Whose neck and throat are deeper than the belly.
Have you seen monkeys chained about the loins,
Or pottle-pots with rings? Just so she joins
Herself together: a dressing she doth love
In a small print below and text above.
What though her name be King, yet 'tis no treason,
Nor breach of statute, for to ask the reason
Of her branched ruff, a cubit every poke.
I seem to wound her, but she strook the stroke
At our departure; and our worships there
Paid for our titles dear as any where.

This, then, was harder fortune than they met with in a previous instance, where, if the charge was rather high, the personal attractions of the landlady afforded some compensation in the eyes of the four Oxford clerks :—

'Twas quickly morning, though by our short stay
We could not find that we had less to pay.
All travellers, this heavy judgment hear :—
A handsome hostess makes the reckoning dear;
Her smiles, her words, your purses must requite 'em,
And every welcome from her adds an item.

We will add the picture of a dignified clergyman, well beneficed and well fed, whom they met in the company of Sir Fulk Greville (soon after created Lord Brooke) at Warwick Castle, and who is understood to be the Reverend Samuel Burton, Archdeacon of Gloucester :—

> With him there was a prelate, by his place
> Archdeacon to the bishop, by his face
> A greater man; for that did counterfect
> Lord abbott of some covent standing yet;
> A corpulent relique; marry and 'tis sin
> Some puritan gets not his face called in:
> Amongst lean brethren it may scandal bring,
> Who seek for parity in every thing.
> For us, let him enjoy all that God sends,
> Plenty of flesh, of livings, and of friends.

There was not a drop of gall in the merry-hearted bishop; but, as may be supposed, he had but small respect for puritans or puritanism, and he never loses an opportunity of a good-natured gibe at them or it.

Poets of the French School:—Carew; Lovelace; Suckling.

Both our poetry and our prose eloquence continued to be generally infected by the spirit of quaintness and conceit, or over-refinement and subtlety of thought, for nearly a century after the first introduction among us of that fashion of writing. Even some of the highest minds did not entirely escape the contagion. If nothing of it is to be found in Spenser or Milton, neither Shakespeare nor Bacon is altogether free from it. Of our writers of an inferior order, it took captive not only the greater number, but some of the greatest, who lived and wrote from the middle of the reign of Elizabeth to nearly the middle of that of Charles II.—from Bishop Andrews, whom we have already mentioned, in prose, and Donne both in prose and verse, to Cowley inclusive. The style in question appears to have been borrowed from Italy: it came in, at least, with the study and imitation of the Italian poetry, being caught apparently from the school of Petrarch, or rather of his later followers, about the same time that a higher inspiration was drawn from

Tasso and Ariosto. It is observable that the species or departments of our poetry which it chiefly invaded were those which have always been more or less influenced by foreign models: it made comparatively little impression upon our dramatic poetry, the most truly native portion of our literature; but our lyrical and elegiac, our didactic and satirical verse, was overrun and materially modified by it, as we have said, for nearly a whole century. The return to a more natural manner, however, was begun to be made long before the expiration of that term. And, as we had received the malady from one foreign literature, so we were indebted for the cure to another. It is commonly assumed that our modern English poetry first evinced a disposition to imitate that of France after the Restoration. But the truth is that the influence of French literature had begun to be felt by our own at a considerably earlier date. The court of Charles I. was far from being so thoroughly French as that of Charles II.; but the connexion established between the two kingdoms through Queen Henrietta could not fail to produce a partial imitation of French models both in writing and in other things. The distinguishing characteristic of French poetry (and indeed of French art generally), neatness in the dressing of the thought, had already been carried to considerable height by Malherbe, Racan, Malleville, and others; and these writers are doubtless to be accounted the true fathers of our own Waller, Carew, Lovelace, and Suckling, who all began to write about this time, and whose verses may be said to have first exemplified in our lighter poetry what may be done by correct and natural expression, smoothness of flow, and all that lies in the *ars celare artem*—the art of making art itself seem nature. Of the four, Waller was perhaps first in the field; but he survived almost till the Revolution, and did not rise to his greatest celebrity till after the Restoration, so that he will more fitly fall to be noticed in a subsequent page. The other three all belong exclusively to the times of Charles I. and of the Commonwealth.

Thomas Carew, styled on the title-page "One of the Gentlemen of the Privy Chamber, and Sewer in Ordinary to His Majesty," is the author of a small volume of poetry first printed in 1640, the year after his death. In polish and evenness of movement, combined with a diction elevated indeed in its tone, as it must needs be by the very necessities of verse, above that of mere good conversation, but yet in ease, lucidity, and direct-

ness rivalling the language of ordinary life, Carew's poetry is not inferior to Waller's; and, while his expression is as correct and natural, and his numbers as harmonious, the music of his verse is richer, and his imagination is warmer and more florid. But the texture of his composition is in general extremely slight, the substance of most of his pieces consisting merely of the elaboration of some single idea; and, if he has more tenderness than Waller, he is far from having so much dignity, variety, or power of sustained effort. His songs beginning "He that loves a rosy cheek," and "Ask me no more where Jove bestows, when June is past, the fading rose," are in all the collections of extracts: the following is less hackneyed:—

Amongst the myrtles as I walked,
Love and my sighs thus intertalked:
"Tell me," said I, in deep distress,
"Where may I find my shepherdess?"

"Thou fool," said Love, "know'st thou not this,
In every thing that's good she is?
In yonder tulip go and seek;
There thou may'st find her lip, her cheek.

In yon enamoured pansy by;
There thou shalt have her curious eye.
In bloom of peach, in rosy bud;
There wave the streamers of her blood.

In brightest lilies that there stand,
The emblems of her whiter hand.
In yonder rising hill there smell
Such sweets as in her bosom dwell."

"Tis true," said I: and thereupon
I went to pluck them one by one,
To make of parts a union;
But on a sudden all was gone.

With that I stopt: said Love, "These be,
Fond man, resemblances of thee;
And, as these flowers, thy joys shall die,
Even in the twinkling of an eye;
And all thy hopes of her shall wither,
Like these short sweets thus knit together."

This may seem sufficiently artificial, and no doubt is so; and, when the reader comes to the *streamers* of the fair lady's blood *waving* in the peach and the rose-bud, he may be disposed to demur to the claim of Carew to be reputed above the seductions

of a striking metaphor, however violent or eccentric. But the distinction of this French school of poetry is certainly not that it altogether eschews conceits and false thoughts: on the contrary, it is decidedly addicted to what is brilliant in preference to what is true and deep, and its system of composition is essentially one of point and artifice; but all this is still to a certain extent in subordination to the principles and laws of good writing; the conceit is always reduced at least to fair rhetorical sound and shape; it is not made alone the substitute for every other attraction, the apology and compensation for every other vice of style, the prime ingredient and almost only thing needful in the composition; when the thought is false and absurd it is not tortured into still greater absurdity and grotesqueness by the perpetration of all sorts of violence upon the words.

There is more quaintness, however, in the poetry of Lovelace than in that of Carew. The poems of Colonel Richard Lovelace are contained in two small volumes, one entitled Lucasta, published in 1649; the other entitled Posthume Poems, published by his brother in 1659, the year after the author's death.* They consist principally of songs and other short pieces. Lovelace's songs, which are mostly amatory, are many of them carelessly enough written, and there are very few of them not defaced by some harshness or deformity; but a few of his best pieces are as sweetly versified as Carew's, with perhaps greater variety of fancy as well as more of vital force; and a tone of chivalrous gentleness and honour gives to some of them a pathos beyond the reach of any mere poetic art. He has written nothing else, however, nearly so exquisite as his well-known lines to Althea in prison; and therefore, familiar as that song is likely to be to most of our readers, it would be unfair to substitute any other specimen of his poetry:—

When love with unconfined wings
  Hovers within my gates,
And my divine Althea brings
  To whisper at the grates;
When I lie tangled in her hair,
  And fettered to her eye;
The birds[1] that wanton in the air
  Know no such liberty.

* Reprints of both have been produced by Mr. Singer; 12mo. Chiswick, 1817, and 1818.

[1] Misprinted "Gods" in the original edition.

When flowing cups run swiftly round,
With no allaying Thames,
Our careless heads with roses bound,
Our hearts with loyal flames;
When thirsty grief in wine we steep,
When healths and draughts go free,
Fishes that tipple in the deep
Know no such liberty.

When, like committed linnets, I
With shriller throat shall sing
The sweetness, mercy, majesty,
And glories of my King;
When I shall voice aloud how good
He is, how great should be;
Enlarged winds that curl the flood
Know no such liberty.

Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage:
If I have freedom in my love,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone that soar above
Enjoy such liberty.

Scattered over Lovelace's poetry are a good many single expressions struck out by a true poetical feeling. Campbell has borrowed from him the line in his Dream of the Exile,

"The sentinel stars set their watch in the sky;"

which in Lovelace is, in one of his addresses to Lucasta,

"Like to the sentinel stars, I watch all night."

Lovelace's days, darkened in their close by the loss of everything except honour, were cut short at the age of forty; his contemporary, Sir John Suckling, who moved gaily and thoughtlessly through his short life as through a dance or a merry game, died, in 1641, at that of thirty-two. Suckling, who is the author of a small collection of poems, as well as of four plays, has none of the pathos of Lovelace or Carew, but he equals them in fluency and natural grace of manner, and he has besides a sprightliness and buoyancy which is all his own. His poetry has a more impulsive air than theirs; and, while, in reference to the greater part of what he has produced, he must be classed along with

them and Waller as an adherent to the French school of propriety and precision, some of the happiest of his effusions are remarkable for a cordiality and impetuosity of manner which has nothing foreign about it, but is altogether English, although there is not much resembling it in any of his predecessors any more than of his contemporaries, unless perhaps in some of Skelton's pieces. His famous ballad of The Wedding is the very perfection of gaiety and archness in verse; and his Session of the Poets, in which he scatters about his wit and humour in a more careless style, may be considered as constituting him the founder of a species of satire, which Cleveland and Marvel and other subsequent writers carried into new applications, and which only expired among us with Swift. We cannot but give the Ballad, often as it has been printed. The subject is the marriage of Roger Boyle, Lord Broghill (afterwards Earl of Orrery), with the Lady Margaret Howard, daughter of the Earl of Suffolk; and the reader will admire the art with which grace and even poetry of expression is preserved throughout along with the forms of speech, as well as of thought, natural to the rustic narrator:—

I tell thee, Dick, where I have been,
Where I the rarest things have seen:
Oh things without compare!
Such sights again cannot be found
In any place on English ground,
Be it at wake or fair.

At Charing Cross, hard by the way
Where we, thou knowest, do sell our hay,
There is a house with stairs:[1]
And there did I see coming down
Such folks as are not in our town,
Vorty at least, in pairs.

Amongst the rest, one pestilent fine
(His beard no bigger, though, than thine)
Walked on before the rest:
Our landlord looks like nothing to him;
The King (God bless him) 'twould undo him
Should he go still so drest.

At course-a-park, withouten doubt,
He should have first been taken out

[1] The present Northumberland House, then called Suffolk House, the seat of the lady's father.

By all the maids i' the town;
Though lusty Roger there had been,
Or little George upon the Green,
Or Vincent of the Crown.

But wot you what? The youth was going
To make an end of all his wooing;
The parson for him staid;
Yet, by his leave, for all his haste,
He did not so much wish all past,
Perchance, as did the maid.

The maid—and thereby hangs a tale—
For such a maid no Whitsun ale
Could ever yet produce;
No grape that 's lusty ripe could be
So round, so plump, so soft as she,
Nor half so full of juice.

Her finger was so small, the ring
Would not stay on which they did bring,
It was too wide a peck;
And to say truth (for out it must)
It looked like the great collar, just,
About our young colt's neck.

Her feet beneath her petticoat
Like little mice stole in and out
As if they feared the light;
But oh! she dances such a way
No sun upon an Easter day[1]
Is half so fine a sight.

He would have kissed her once or twice,
But she would not, she was so nice,
She would not do 't in sight;
And then she looked as who should say,
I will do what I list to day,
And you shall do 't at night.

Her cheeks so rare a white was on,
No daisy makes comparison;
Who sees them is undone;
For streaks of red were mingled there
Such as are on a Katharine pear,
The side that 's next the sun.

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[1] It was formerly believed that the sun danced on Easter-day. See Brand's Popular Antiquities (edit. of 1841), i. 95; where the present verse is strangely quoted in illustration of this popular notion from "a rare book entitled Recreation for Ingenious Head Pieces, &c., 8vo. Lon. 1667."

Her lips were red, and one was thin
Compared to that was next her chin;
Some bee had stung it newly.
But, Dick, her eyes so guard her face,
I durst no more upon them gaze
Than on the sun in July.

Her mouth so small when she does speak,
Thou 'dst swear her teeth her words did break
That they might passage get:
But she so handled still the matter,
They came as good as ours, or better,
And are not spent a whit.

. . . . . .

Passion o' me! how I run on!
There 's that that would be thought upon,
I trow, besides the bride:
The business of the kitchen 's great,
For it is fit that men should eat,
Nor was it there denied.

Just in the nick the cook knocked thrice,
And all the waiters in a trice
His summons did obey;
Each serving-man with dish in hand
Marched boldly up, like our train-band,
Presented and away.

When all the meat was on the table,
What man of knife, or teeth, was able
To stay to be entreated?
And this the very reason was,
Before the parson could say grace
The company was seated.

Now hats fly off, and youths carouse;
Healths first go round, and then the house;
The bride's came thick and thick;
And, when 'twas named another's health,
Perhaps he made it her's by stealth,
And who could help it, Dick?

O' the sudden up they rise and dance;
Then sit again and sigh and glance;
Then dance again and kiss:
Thus several ways the time did pass,
Whilst every woman wished her place,
And every man wished his.

By this time all were stolen aside
To counsel and undress the bride;
But that he must not know:
But yet 'twas thought he guessed her mind,
And did not mean to stay behind
Above an hour or so.

When in he came, Dick, there she lay,
Like new-fallen snow melting away:
'Twas time, I trow, to part:
Kisses were now the only stay,
Which soon she gave, as who would say,
Good bye, with all my heart.

But, just as heavens would have to cross it,
In came the bride-maids with the posset:
The bride-groom ate in spite;
For, had he left the women to 't,
It would have cost two hours to do 't,
Which were too much that night.

. . . . . .

Denham.

To this date belongs a remarkable poem, the Cooper's Hill of Sir John Denham, first published in 1642. It immediately drew universal attention. Denham, however, had the year before made himself known as a poet by his tragedy of The Sophy, on the appearance of which Waller remarked that he had broken out like the Irish rebellion, threescore thousand strong, when nobody was aware or in the least suspected it. Cooper's Hill may be considered as belonging in point of composition to the same school with Sir John Davies's Nosce Teipsum; and, if it has not all the concentration of that poem, it is equally pointed, correct, and stately, with, partly owing to the subject, a warmer tone of imagination and feeling, and a fuller swell of verse. The spirit of the same classical style pervades both; and they are the two greatest poems in that style which had been produced down to the date at which we are now arrived. Denham is the author of a number of other compositions in verse, and especially of some songs and other shorter pieces, several of which are very spirited; but the fame of his principal poem has thrown everything else he has written into the shade. It is remarkable that

many biographical notices of this poet make him to have survived nearly till the Revolution, and relate various stories of the miseries of his protracted old age; when the fact is, that he died in 1668, at the age of fifty-three.*

CLEVELAND.

But, of all the cavalier poets, the one who did his cause the heartiest and stoutest service, and who, notwithstanding much carelessness or ruggedness of execution, possessed perhaps, even considered simply as a poet, the richest and most various faculty, was John Cleveland, the most popular verse-writer of his own day, the most neglected of all his contemporaries ever since. Among the one hundred and sixty-one poets, from Robert of Gloucester to Sir Francis Fane, whose choicest relics furnish out Ellis's three volumes of Specimens, the name of Cleveland does not occur. Nor is his poetry included either in Anderson's or in Chalmers's collection. Yet for nearly twenty years he was held to be the greatest among living English poets. Cleveland was the eldest son of the Rev. Thomas Cleveland, vicar of Hinckley and rector of Stoke, in Leicestershire, and he was born at Loughborough in that county in 1613. Down to the breaking out of the civil war, he resided at St. John's College, Cambridge, of which he was a Fellow, and seems to have distinguished himself principally by his Latin poetry. But, when every man took his side, with whatever weapons he could wield, for king or parliament, Anthony Wood tells us that Cleveland was the first writer who came forth as a champion of the royal cause in English verse. To that cause he adhered till its ruin; at last in 1655, after having led for some years a fugitive life, he was caught and thrown into prison at Yarmouth; but, after a detention of a few months, Cromwell, on his petition, allowed him to go at large. The transaction was honourable to both parties. Cleveland's character, which may be mistaken by those who

* The readers of the Mémoires de Grammont will remember the figure he makes in that work, where he is described as "Le Chevalier Denham, comblé de richesses, aussi bien que d'années," and as having for the first time entered into the marriage state, at the age of seventy-nine, with Miss Brook, a famous court beauty, then only eighteen. The fact is, that this was a second marriage, and that, whatever was the lady's age, Denham himself was then only about fifty. His load of riches is probably as much exaggerated by the lively historian of the Comte de Grammont as his load of years.

know him only from some of his unscrupulous pasquinades or other poetry, cannot be better painted than it is by himself in his address to the Protector: "I am induced," he said, "to believe that, next to my adherence to the royal party, the cause of my confinement is the narrowness of my estate; for none stand committed whose estates can bail them. I only am the prisoner, who have no acres to be my hostage. Now, if my poverty be criminal (with reverence be it spoken), I implead your Highness, whose victorious arms have reduced me to it, as accessory to my guilt. Let it suffice, my Lord, that the calamity of the war hath made us poor: do not punish us for it." "I beseech your Highness," he goes on, "put some bounds to the overthrow, and do not pursue the chase to the other world. Can your thunder be levelled so low as to our grovelling condition? Can your towering spirit, which hath quarried upon kingdoms, make a stoop at us, who are the rubbish of these ruins? Methinks I hear your former achievements interceding with you not to sully your glories with trampling upon the prostrate, nor clog the wheel of your chariot with so degenerous a triumph. The most renowned heroes have ever with such tenderness cherished their captives that their swords did but cut out work for their courtesies." And again:—"For the service of his Majesty, if it be objected, I am so far from excusing it, that I am ready to allege it in my vindication. I cannot conceit that my fidelity to my prince should taint me in your opinion; I should rather expect it should recommend me to your favour. . . . You see, my Lord, how much I presume upon the greatness of your spirit, that dare present my indictment with so frank a confession, especially in this, which I may so safely deny that it is almost arrogancy in me to own it; for the truth is, I was not qualified enough to serve him: all I could do was to bear a part in his sufferings, and to give myself to be crushed with his fall." "My Lord," he concludes, "you see my crimes; as to my defence, you bear it about you. I shall plead nothing in my justification but your Highness's clemency, which, as it is the constant inmate of a valiant breast, if you graciously be pleased to extend it to your suppliant, in taking me out of this withering durance, your Highness will find that mercy will establish you more than power, though all the days of your life were as pregnant with victories as your twice auspicious Third of September." There is no artful flattery or coaxing in this: Cromwell would read in it some-

thing of a spirit akin to his own. But Cleveland did not long survive his release; he died in April, 1658, a few months before the Protector himself—like his brother loyalist poet Lovelace, who ended his days about the same time, snatched away just when the hated dominion that had been so fatal to his fortunes was about to break up and vanish from the land for ever.

Cleveland is commonly regarded as a mere dealer in satire and invective, and as having no higher qualities than a somewhat rude force and vehemence. His prevailing fault is a straining after vigour and concentration of expression; and few of his pieces are free from a good deal of obscurity, harshness, or other disfigurement, occasioned by this habit or tendency, working in association with an alert, ingenious, and fertile fancy, a neglect of and apparently a contempt for neatness of finish, and the turn for quaintness and quibbling characteristic of the school to which he belongs—for Cleveland must be considered as essentially one of the old wit poets. Most of his poems seem to have been thrown off in haste, and never to have been afterwards corrected or revised. There are, however, among them some that are not without vivacity and sprightliness; and others of his more solemn verses have all the dignity that might be expected from his prose letter to Cromwell.*

* Many poems, it is to be noted, are found in the common editions of Cleveland's works which are known not to be his. Thus, in the edition before us, 8vo. Lon. 1687, what are entitled the Additions, from p. 200 to 265, including A Lenten Litany, Content, A Sing-song on Clarinda's Wedding, Vituperium Uxoris, and other remarkable pieces, are, it seems, copied *verbatim* from a volume entitled Ex Otio Negotium, or Martial his Epigrams Translated, with Sundry Poems and Fancies; by R. Fletcher. 8vo. Lon. 1656. And other pieces in the same Second Part of the Collection, entitled John Cleveland's Revived Poems, Orations, Epistles, and other of his genuine incomparable pieces, now at last published from his original copies by some of his intrusted friends, are by Denham, J. Hall, Jasper Mayne, Thomas Weaver, and others. See A Select Collection of Poems, with Notes Biographical and Historical, by J. Nichols, 1780–1–2; vol. vii. pp. 50 and 376. Several of Cleveland's poems are reprinted in his seventh volume by Mr. Nichols, who has there (pp. 10–13), and in vol. viii. pp. 308–311, given an account of the old poet; with whom, in the Dedication of his Collection to Dr. Percy (the editor of the Reliques), he claims a relationship, stating at the same time that Percy's grandmother by the father's side was a niece of Cleveland's. The original edition of Cleveland's works is dedicated to Francis Turner, D.D., Master of St. John's College, Cambridge (afterwards bishop first of Rochester and then of Ely), by the editors J. L. and S. D., who appear to have been John Lake, D.D., vicar of Leeds (afterwards bishop of Chichester), who had been a pupil of Cleveland's at Cambridge, and Dr. Drake, vicar of Pontefract.

The following stanzas are entitled The General Eclipse:—

Ladies, that gild the glittering noon,
And by reflection mend his ray;
Whose beauty makes the sprightly sun
To dance, as upon Easter-day;[1]
What are you, now the Queen's away?

Courageous eagles, who have whet
Your eyes upon majestic light,
And thence derived such martial heat
That still your looks maintain the fight;
What are you, since the King's good night?

Cavalier buds, whom nature teems
As a reserve for England's throne;
Spirits whose double edge redeems
The last age, and adorns your own;
What are you, now the Prince is gone?

As an obstructed fountain's head
Cuts the entail off from the streams,
And brooks are disinherited;
Honour and beauty are mere dreams,
Since Charles and Mary lost their beams.

Criminal valours! who commit
Your gallantry;[2] whose pæan brings
A psalm of mercy after it;
In this sad solstice of the king's,
Your victory hath mewed her wings.

. . . . . .

The following epitaph on Ben Jonson is the shortest and best of several tributes to the memory of that poet, with whose masculine genius that of Cleveland seems to have strongly sympathised:—

The Muses' fairest light in no dark time;
The wonder of a learned age; the line
Which none can pass; the most proportioned wit
To nature; the best judge of what was fit;
The deepest, plainest, highest, clearest pen;
The voice most echoed by consenting men;

---

[1] See note on Suckling's Ballad of The Wedding, ante, p. 20.

[2] We still use the term *commit* only in connexion with something wrong, as to commit a crime, or an error; but it is applied much more extensively by our old writers, though also always in a bad sense.

The soul which answered best to all well said
By others, and which most requital made;
Tuned to the highest key of ancient Rome,
Returning all her music with his own;
In whom with Nature Study claimed a part,
Yet who unto himself owed all his art;
Here lies Ben Jonson: every age will look
With sorrow here, with wonder on his book.

Elsewhere he thus expresses his preference for Jonson, as a dramatist, over the greatest of his contemporaries:—

Shakespeare may make griefs, merry Beaumont's style
Ravish and melt anger into a smile;
In winter nights or after meals they be,
I must confess, very good company;
But thou exact'st our best hours' industry;[1]
We may read them, we ought to study thee;
Thy scenes are precepts; every verse doth give
Counsel, and teach us, not to laugh, but live.

In a third elegy he rises to a more rapturous strain:—

What thou wert, like the hard oracles of old,
Without an ecstasy cannot be told:
We must be ravished first; thou must infuse
Thyself into us, both the theme and muse;
Else, though we all conspired to make thy hearse
Our works, so that it had been but one great verse;
Though the priest had translated for that time
The Liturgy, and buried thee in rhyme;
So that in metre we had heard it said,
Poetic dust is to poetic laid;
And though, that dust being Shakespeare's, thou might'st have,
Not his room, but the poet for thy grave;
So that, as thou didst prince of numbers die,
And live, so thou mightest in numbers lie;
'Twere frail solemnity:—verses on thee,
And not like thine, would but kind libels be;
And we, not speaking thy whole worth, should raise
Worse blots than they that envied thy praise.

Of several elegies by this poet upon Charles I. the following is perhaps the most striking:—

Charles!—ah! forbear, forbear, lest mortals prize
His name too dearly, and idolatrize.

[1] This may be compared with what Corbet says in describing his landlady at Warwick. See *ante*, p. 13.

His name! our loss! Thrice cursed and forlorn
Be that black night which ushered in this morn.

Charles our dread sovereign!—hold! lest outlawed sense
Bribe and seduce tame reason to dispense
With those celestial powers, and distrust
Heaven can behold such treason and prove just.

Charles our dread sovereign's murdered!—tremble, and
View what convulsions shoulder-shake this land:
Court, city, country, nay three kingdoms run
To their last stage, and set with him, their sun.

Charles our dread sovereign's murdered at his gate!
Fell fiends! dire Hydras of a stiff-necked state!
Strange body politic, whose members spread,
And monster-like swell bigger than their head.

Charles of Great Britain! He! who was the known
King of three realms, lies murdered in his own.
He! he! who Faith's Defender lived and stood,[1]
Died here to rebaptize it in his blood.

No more! no more! Fame's trump shall echo all
The rest in dreadful thunder. Such a fall
Great Christendom ne'er patterned; and 'twas strange
Earth's centre reeled not at this dismal change.

The blow struck Britain blind; each well-set limb
By dislocation was lopt off in him;
And, though she yet lives, she lives but to condole
Three bleeding bodies left without a soul.

Religion puts on black; sad Loyalty
Blushes and mourns to see bright Majesty
Butchered by such assassinates; nay both
'Gainst God, 'gainst Law, Allegiance, and their Oath.

Farewell, sad Isle! farewell! Thy fatal glory
Is summed, cast up, and cancelled in this story.

Cleveland, however, after all, is perhaps most in his element when his chief inspiration is scorn, and *facit indignatio versum.* The most elaborate of his satires or invectives is that which he calls The Rebel Scot. It is rather too long to be given entire; and in truth a good deal of it is more furious than forcible; but

[1] Commonly printed:—

"Who lived and Faith's defender stood."

we will transcribe the commencing portion, which contains the most effective passages :—

How! Providence! and yet a Scottish crew!
Then Madame Nature wears black patches too.
What! shall our nation be in bondage thus
Unto a land that truckles under us?
Ring the bells backward: I am all on fire;
Not all the buckets in a country quire
Shall quench my rage. A poet should be feared
When angry, like a comet's flaming beard.
And where's the Stoic can his wrath appease
To see his country sick of Pym's disease,—
By Scotch invasion to be made a prey
To such pig-widgeon myrmidons as they?
But that there's charm in verse, I would not quote
The name of Scot without an antidote;
Unless my head were red,[1] that I might brew
Invention there that might be poison too.
Were I a drowsy judge, whose dismal note
Disgorgeth halters, as a juggler's throat
Doth ribands; could I in Sir Empiric's tone
Speak pills in phrase, and quack destruction,
Or roar like Marshall, that Geneva bull,
Hell and damnation a pulpit-full;
Yet, to express a Scot, to play that prize,
Not all those mouth-granados can suffice.
Before a Scot can properly be cursed,
I must, like Hocus, swallow daggers first.
Come, keen Iambics, with your badger's feet,
And, badger-like, bite till your teeth do meet.
Help, ye tart satirists, to imp my rage
With all the scorpions that should whip this age.
Scots are like witches; do but whet your pen,
Scratch till the blood come, they'll not hurt you then.
Now, as the Martyrs were enforced to take
The shapes of beasts, like hypocrites, at stake,
I'll bait my Scot so, yet not cheat your eyes;—
A Scot, within a beast, is no disguise.
No more let Ireland brag her harmless nation
Harbours no venom, since that Scots plantation.
Nor can our feigned antiquity obtain:
Since they came in, England hath wolves again.
The Scot that kept the Tower might have shown,
Within the grate of his own breast alone,

[1] Red hair was in the worst repute formerly, and was attributed alike to Cain, to Judas, and to the devil.

The leopard and the panther, and engrossed
What all those wild collegiates had cost
The honest high-shoes,[1] in their termly fees
First to the salvage-lawyer, next to these.
Nature herself doth Scotchmen beasts confess,
Making their country such a wilderness;
A land that brings in question and suspense
God's omnipresence, but that Charles came thence—
But that Montrose and Crawford's royal band
Atoned their sin, and christened half their land:
Nor is it all the nation hath these spots:—
There is a Church as well as Kirk of Scots;
As in a picture where the squinting paint
Shows fiend on this side, and on that side saint.
He that saw Hell in his melancholy dream,
And, in the twilight of his fancy's theme,
Scared from his sins, repented in a fright,
Had he viewed Scotland had turned proselyte.
A land where one may pray with cursed intent,
O may they never suffer banishment!
Had Cain been Scot, God would have changed his doom,—
Not forced him wander, but confined him home.
Like Jews they spread, and as infection fly,
As if the Devil had ubiquity.
Hence 'tis they live as rovers, and defy
This or that place, rags of geography:
They 're citizens o' the world, they 're all in all;
Scotland's a nation epidemical.

The poem is accompanied by a Latin version on the opposite page, which however is not by Cleveland, but by Thomas Gawen, a Fellow of New College, Oxford.

This may be fitly followed up by the verses headed The Definition of a Protector:—

What 's a Protector? He 's a stately thing
That apes it in the non-age of a king:
A tragic actor, Cæsar in a clown;
He 's a brass farthing stamped with a crown:
A bladder blown, with other breaths puffed full;
Not the Perillus, but Perillus' bull:
Æsop's proud Ass veiled in the Lion's skin;
An outward saint lined with a Devil within;
An echo whence the royal sound doth come,
But just as a barrel-head sounds like a drum:

[1] Perhaps this should be *high-lows*—that is, rustics.

Fantastic image of the royal head,
The brewer's with the king's arms quartered:
He is a counterfeited piece, that shows
Charles his effigies with a copper nose:
In fine, he 's one we must Protector call;—
From whom the King of Kings protect us all.

And we fear the still more bitter bile of the following effusion On O. P. Sick, with which we shall conclude our extracts, must be understood to be directed against the same illustrious quarter:—

Yield, periwigged impostor, yield to fate,
Religious whiffler, mountebank of state,[1]
Down to the lowest abyss, the blackest shade,
That night does own; that so the earth thou 'st made
Loathsome by thousand barbarisms may be
Delivered from heaven's vengeance, and from thee.
The reeking steam of thy fresh villanies
Would spot the stars, and menstruate the skies;
Force them to break the league they 've made with men,
And with a flood rinse the foul world again.
Thy bays are tarnished with thy cruelties,
Rebellions, sacrilege, and perjuries.
Descend, descend, thou veiled Devil! Fall
Thou subtle bloodsucker, thou cannibal!
Thy arts are catching; cozen Satan too;
Thou hast a trick more than he ever knew;
He ne'er was atheist yet; persuade him to 't;
The schismatics will back thee, horse and foot.

In one of his prose pieces, The Character of a London Diurnal, Cleveland introduces other personal peculiarities of Cromwell besides his fiery nasal organ. "This Cromwell," he observes, "is never so valorous as when he is making speeches for the Association; which, nevertheless, he doth, somewhat ominously, with his neck awry, holding up his ear as if he expected Mahomet's pigeon to come and prompt him. He should be a bird of prey, too, by his bloody beak;" &c. It is probable enough that this attitude of one threading a needle, or trying to look round a corner, may have been customary with Cromwell in speaking at the early date to which the description refers, as it appears to have been with his sect in general: in another poem Cleveland depicts the Puritan preacher as—

[1] Misprinted "fate" in the edition before us.

With face and fashion to be known
For one of sure election;
With eyes all white, and many a groan;
With neck aside, to draw in tone;
With harp in 's nose, &c.

WITHER.

These last-mentioned writers — Carew, Lovelace, Suckling, Denham, and Cleveland—were all, as we have seen, cavaliers; but the cause of puritanism and the parliament had also its poets as well as that of love and loyalty. Of these the two most eminent were Marvel and Wither. Marvel's era, however, is rather after the Restoration. George Wither, who was born in 1588, covers nearly eighty years of the seventeenth century with his life, and not very far from sixty with his works: his first publication, his volume of satires entitled Abuses Stript and Whipt, having appeared in 1611, and some of his last pieces only a short time before his death in 1667. The entire number of his separate works, as they have been reckoned up by modern bibliographers, exceeds a hundred. Two songs or short poems of Wither's inserted by Percy in his Reliques *—the one beginning

Shall I, wasting in despair,
Die because a woman's fair?
Or make pale my cheeks with care
'Cause another's rosy are?
Be she fairer than the day,
Or the flowery meads in May;
If she be not so to me,
What care I how fair she be?

the other entitled The Stedfast Shepherd, an exquisitely graceful as well as high-thoughted carol,—first recalled attention to this forgotten writer; his high merits were a few years afterwards more fully illustrated by Mr. Octavius Gilchrist in the Gentleman's Magazine; and he was subsequently made more widely known by the specimens of him given by Ellis,—among the rest the passage of consummate beauty (previously quoted by Gilchrist) from his Shepherd's Hunting, published in 1615, while he was confined in the Marshalsea, in which, breaking out into

* Vol. iii. pp. 190 and 264.

what we may call a hymn or pæan of gratitude and affection, he recounts all that Poetry and his Muse still were and had ever been to him:—

In my former days of bliss
Her divine skill taught me this,—
That from every thing I saw
I could some invention draw,
And raise pleasure to her height
Through the meanest object's sight.
By the murmur of a spring,
Or the least bough's rusteling;
By a daisy, whose leaves spread
Shut when Titan goes to bed;
Or a shady bush or tree,
She could more infuse in me
Than all Nature's beauties can
In some other wiser man.
By her help I also now
Make this churlish place allow
Some things that may sweeten gladness
In the very gall of sadness.
The dull loneness, the black shade,
That these hanging vaults have made;
The strange music of the waves
Beating on these hollow caves;
This black den, which rocks emboss,
Overgrown with eldest moss;
The rude portals, that give sight
More to terror than delight;
This my chamber of neglect,
Walled about with disrespect;
From all these, and this dull air,
A fit object for despair,
She hath taught me by her might
To draw comfort and delight.
Therefore, thou best earthly bliss,
I will cherish thee for this,—
Poesy!—thou sweet'st content
That e'er heaven to mortals lent.
Though they as a trifle leave thee
Whose dull thoughts cannot conceive thee;
Though thou be to them a scorn
That to nought but earth are born;
Let my life no longer be
Than I am in love with thee.
Though our wise ones call thee madness,
Let me never taste of gladness

If I love not thy maddest fits
More than all their greatest wits.
And, though some, too seeming holy,
Do account thy raptures folly,
Thou dost teach me to contemn
What makes knaves and fools of them.

One excellence for which all Wither's writings are eminent, his prose as well as his verse, is their genuine English. His unaffected diction, even now, has scarcely a stain of age upon it, —but flows on, ever fresh and transparent, like a pebbled rill. As a specimen of his clear and easy narrative style, we will transcribe a few passages from the Introduction to his Abuses Stript and Whipt, in which, by way of explaining the occasion of the work, he relates the history of his life to that date. After telling us that he had been well grounded at school in the Latin and Greek grammar, he proceeds to give an account of his first experience of Oxford :—

It is the spring of knowledge, that imparts
A thousand several sciences and arts;
A pure clear fount, whose water is by odds
Far sweeter than the nectar of the gods;
Or, for to give 't a title that befits,
It is the very nursery of wits.
There once arrived, 'cause my wits were raw,
I fell to wondering at each thing I saw;
And, for my learning, made a month's vacation
In noting of the place's situation;
The palaces and temples that were due
Unto the wise Minerva's hallowed crew;
Their cloisters, walks, and groves . . . . .
But, having this experience, and withal
Gotten some practice at the tennis ball,
My tutor, telling me I was not sent
To have my time there vain and idly spent,
From childish humours gently called me in,
And with his grave instructions did begin
To teach; and by his good persuasions sought
To bring me to a love of what he taught.
Then, after that, he laboured to impart
The hidden secrets of the Logic art;
Instead of Grammar rules, he read me than
Old Scotus, Seton, and new Keckermann.
He showed me which the Predicables be,
As Genus, Species, and the other three.

So, having said enough of their contents,
Handles in order the ten Predicaments;
Next Postprædicamenta, with Priorum
Perihermenias et Posteriorum,
He, with the Topics, opens, and descries
Elenchi, full of subtle fallacies:
These to unfold indeed he took much pain,
But to my dull capacity in vain;
For all he spake was to as little pass
As in old time unto the vulgar was
The Romish rite, which, whether bad or good,
The poor unlearned never understood;
But of the meaning were as far to seek
As Coriat's horse was of his master's Greek,
When in that tongue he made a speech at length,
To show the beast the greatness of his strength;
For I his meaning did no more conjecture
Than if he had been reading Hebrew lecture.
His Infinities, Individuities,
Contraries, and Subcontrarieties,
Divisions, Subdivisions, and a crew
Of terms and words such as I never knew,
My shallow understanding so confounded,
That I was gravelled like a ship that 's grounded;
And, in despair the mystery to gain,
Neglecting all, took neither heed nor pain.
Yea, I remained in that amazing plight
Till Cynthia six times lost her borrowed light.
But then, ashamed to find myself still mute,
And other little dandiprats dispute,
That could distinguish upon Rationale,
Yet scarcely heard of Verbum Personale;
Or could by heart, like parrots, in the schools
Stand prattling, these methought were pretty fools;
And therefore, in some hope to profit so,
That I like them at least might make a show,
I reached my books that I had cast about,
To see if I could pick his meaning out;
And, prying on them with some diligence,
At length I felt my dull intelligence
Begin to open, and perceived more
In half an hour than half a year before.
And, which is strange, the things I had forgot,
And till that very day remembered not
Since first my tutor read them, those did then
Return into my memory again:
So that with which I had so much to do
A week made easy, yea, and pleasing too.

Afterwards he betook himself to court:—

But there I viewed another world, methought,
And little hope, or none, of that I sought.
I saw I must, if there I aught would do,
First learn new fashions, and new language too.
If I should have been hung, I knew not how
To teach my body how to cringe and bow;
Or to embrace a fellow's hinder quarters,
As if I meant to steal away his garters.
When any stooped to me with congees trim,
All I could do was stand and laugh at him.
Bless me, thought I, what will this coxcomb do?
When I perceived one reaching at my shoe.
But, when I heard him speak, why I was fully
Possessed we learned but barbarism in Tully.
There was not any street but had a wench
That at once coming could have learned them French.
Grecians had little there to do, poor souls,
Unless to talk with beggarmen in Paul's.
All our school Latin would not serve to draw
An instrument adjudged good in law.
Nay, which is more, they would have taught me fain
To go new-learn my English tongue again;
As if there had been reason to suspect
Our ancient-used Hampshire dialect.

Though still disappointed in his hopes of preferment, he continues to believe there is a happy time to come—"Which," he says in conclusion,

— when I have most need of comfort, shall
Send me true joy to make amends for all.
But say it be not; whilst I draw this air,
I have a heart, I hope, shall ne'er despair;
Because there is a God, with whom I trust
My soul shall triumph when my body's dust.
Yet, when I found that my endeavours still
Fell out as they would have 't that wished me ill;
And when I saw the world was grown so coy
To curb me as too young them to employ,
And that her greatness thought she did not want me,
Or found no calling bad enough to grant me
(And having scaped some envies, which to touch
Unto this purpose appertains not much);
Weighing both bad,[1] and therewith also this
How great a shame and what reproach it is

[1] Considering both to be bad—apparently, those who specially obstructed

To be still idle; and because I spied
How glad they would be that my fate envied
To find me so; although the world doth scorn
To allow me action, as if I were born
Before my time; yet e'en to let her see
In spite of Fortune I 'd employed be,
Casting preferment's too much care aside,
And leaving that to God, that can provide,
The actions of the present time I eyed,
And all her secret villanies descried.
I stripped Abuse from all her colours quite,
And laid her ugly face to open sight.
I laboured to observe her ways, and then
In general the state and tricks of men.
Wherein although my labour were not seen,
Yet, trust me, the discovery hath been
My great content; and I have for my pain,
Although no outward, yet an inward gain.
In which because I can with all my heart
Allow my countrymen to share a part,
And 'cause I think it may do some a pleasure,
On opportunity I 'll now take seizure,
And summon up my Muse to make relation:—
I may be employed ere long;—now 's my vacation.

In all this, too, we may read the character of the man—enthusiastic and sincerely anxious to reform the world, but at once suspicious and vain to an inordinate degree, and ever ready, consequently, to take anything for granted in his own favour or against another, to change his views and his course suddenly and violently, and still, however decidedly or frequently he might have turned his back upon his former self, to continue to believe that he was in the right and every one else in the wrong. Down to the breaking out of the war between the king and the parliament, Wither, although his pious poetry made him a favourite with the puritans, had always professed himself a strong church and state man; even at so late a date as in 1639 when he was above fifty, he served as a captain of horse in the expedition against the Scotch Covenanters; and when two or three years after he took arms on the other side, he had yet his new principles in a great measure to seek or make. It appears not to have been till a considerable time after this that his old ad-

his endeavours, and the world generally, that would not avail itself of his services.

miration of the monarchy and the hierarchy became suddenly converted into the conviction that both one and other were, and had been all along, only public nuisances—the fountains of all the misrule and misery of the nation. What mainly instigated him to throw himself into the commencing contest with such eagerness seems to have been simply the notion, which possessed and tormented him all his life, that he was born with a peculiar genius for public affairs, and that things had very little chance of going right unless he were employed. With his head full of this conceit, it mattered comparatively little on which side he took his stand to begin with: he would speedily make all even and right; the one thing needful in the first instance was, that his services should be taken advantage of. Of course, Wither's opinions, like those of other men, were influenced by his position, and he was no doubt perfectly sincere in the most extreme of the new principles which he was ultimately led to profess. The defect of men of his temper is not insincerity. But they are nevertheless apt to be almost as unstable as if they had no strong convictions at all. Their convictions, in truth, however strong, do not rest so much upon reason or principle, as upon mere passion. They see everything through so thick and deeply coloured an atmosphere of self, that its real shape goes for very little in their conception of it; change only the hue of the haze, or the halo, with which it is thus invested, and you altogether change to them the thing itself—making the white appear black, the bright dim, the round square, or the reverse. Wither, with all his ardour and real honesty, appears never in fact to have acquired any credit for reliability, or steadiness in the opinions he held, either from friends or opponents. He very naïvely lets out this himself in a prose pamphlet which he published in 1624, entitled The Scholar's Purgatory, being a vindication of himself addressed to the Bishops, in which, after stating that he had been offered more money and better entertainment if he would have employed himself in setting forth heretical fancies than he had any chance of ever obtaining by the profession of the truth, he adds, "Yea, sometimes I have been wooed to the profession of their wild and ill-grounded opinions by the sectaries of so many several separations, that, had I liked, or rather had not God been the more merciful to me, I might have been Lieutenant, if not Captain, of some new band of such volunteers long ere this

time." Overtures of this kind are, of course, only made to persons who are believed to be open to them. It is plain from his own account that Wither was thus early notorious as a speculator or trader in such securities—as one ready, not precisely to sell himself, his opinions, and his conscience, to the highest bidder, but yet to be gained over if the offer were only made large enough to convert as well as purchase him. There is a great deal of very passable wearing and working honesty of this kind in the world.

The history of Wither's numerous publications has been elaborately investigated by the late Mr. Park in the first and second volumes of the British Bibliographer; many of his poems have been reprinted by Sir Egerton Brydges, and others of his admirers; and an ample account of his life and writings, drawn up with a large and intimate knowledge, as well as affectionate zeal and painstaking, which make it supersede whatever had been previously written on the subject, forms the principal article (extending over more than 130 pages) of Mr. Wilmott's Lives of Sacred Poets (8vo. Lon. 1834). Much injustice, however, has been done to Wither by the hasty judgment that has commonly been passed, even by his greatest admirers, upon his later political poetry, as if it consisted of mere party invective and fury, and all that he had written of any enduring value or interest was to be found in the productions of the early part of his life. Some at least of his political pieces are very remarkable for their vigour and terseness. As a specimen we will give a portion of a poem which he published without his name in 1647, under the title of "Amygdala Britannica; Almonds for Parrots; a dish of Stone-fruit, partly shelled and partly unshelled; which, if cracked, picked, and well digested, may be wholesome against those epidemic distempers of the brain now predominant, and prevent some malignant diseases likely to ensue: composed heretofore by a well-known modern author, and now published according to a copy found written with his own hand. *Qui bene latuit bene vixit.*" This fantastic title-page (with the manufacture of which the bookseller may have had more to do than Wither himself) was suited to the popular taste of the day, but would little lead a modern reader to expect the nervous concentration and passionate earnestness of such verses as the following:—

The time draws near, and hasteth on,
In which strange works shall be begun;

And prosecutions, whereon shall
Depend much future bliss or bale.
If to the left hand you decline,
Assured destruction they divine;
But, if the right-hand course ye take,
This island it will happy make.

A time draws nigh in which you may
As you shall please the chess-men play;
Remove, confine, check, leave, or take,
Dispose, depose, undo, or make,
Pawn, rook, knight, bishop, queen, or king,
And act your wills in every thing:
But, if that time let slip you shall,
For yesterday in vain you call.

A time draws nigh in which the sun
Will give more light than he hath done:
Then also you shall see the moon
Shine brighter than the sun at noon;
And many stars now seeming dull
Give shadows like the moon at full.
Yet then shall some, who think they see,
Wrapt in Egyptian darkness be.

A time draws nigh when with your blood
You shall preserve the viper's brood,
And starve your own; yet fancy than[1]
That you have played the pelican;
But, when you think the frozen snakes
Have changed their natures for your sakes,
They, in requital, will contrive
Your mischief who did them revive.

A time will come when they that wake
Shall dream; and sleepers undertake
The grand affairs; yet,[2] few men know
Which are the dreamers of these two;
And fewer care by which of these
They guided be, so they have ease:
But an alarum shall advance
Your drowsy spirits from that trance.

A time shall come ere long in which
Mere beggars shall grow soonest rich;
The rich with wants be pinched more
Than such as go from door to door;

---

[1] Then. [2] As yet.

The honourable by the base
Shall be despited to their face;
The truth defamed be with lies;
The fool preferred before the wise;
And he that fighteth to be free,
By conquering enslaved shall be.

. . . . . .

A time will come when see you shall
Toads fly aloft and eagles crawl;
Wolves walk abroad in human shapes;
Men turn to asses, hogs, and apes:
But, when that cursed time is come,
Well 's he that is both deaf and dumb;
That nothing speaketh, nothing hears,
And neither hopes, desires, nor fears.

. . . . . .

When men shall generally confess
Their folly and their wickedness;
Yet act as if there neither were
Among them conscience, wit, or fear;
When they shall talk as if they had
Some brains, yet do as they were mad;
And nor by reason, nor by noise,
By human or by heavenly voice,
By being praised or reproved,
By judgments or by mercies, moved:
Then look for so much sword and fire
As such a temper doth require.

. . . . . .

Ere God his wrath on Balaam wreaks,
First by his ass to him he speaks;
Then shows him in an angel's hand
A sword, his courses to withstand;
But, seeing still he forward went,
Quite through his heart a sword he sent.
And God will thus, if thus they do,
Still deal with kings, and subjects too;
That, where his grace despised is grown,
He by his judgments may be known.

Neither Churchhill nor Cowper ever wrote anything in the same style better than this. The modern air, too, of the whole, with the exception of a few words, is wonderful. But this, as we have said, is the character of all Wither's poetry—of his earliest as well as of his latest. It is nowhere more conspicuous

than in his early religious verses, especially in his collection entitled Songs and Hymns of the Church, first published in 1624. There is nothing of the kind in the language more perfectly beautiful than some of these. We subjoin two of them:—

Thanksgiving for Seasonable Weather. Song 85.

Lord, should the sun, the clouds, the wind,
The air, and seasons be
To us so froward and unkind
As we are false to thee;
All fruits would quite away be burned,
Or lie in water drowned,
Or blasted be or overturned,
Or chilled on the ground.

But from our duty though we swerve,
Thou still dost mercy show,
And deign thy creatures to preserve,
That men might thankful grow:
Yea, though from day to day we sin,
And thy displeasure gain,
No sooner we to cry begin
But pity we obtain.

The weather now thou changed hast
That put us late to fear,
And when our hopes were almost past
Then comfort did appear.
The heaven the earth's complaints hath heard;
They reconciled be;
And thou such weather hast prepared
As we desired of thee.

For which, with lifted hands and eyes,
To thee we do repay
The due and willing sacrifice
Of giving thanks to-day;
Because such offerings we should not
To render thee be slow,
Nor let that mercy be forgot
Which thou art pleased to show.

Thanksgiving for Victory. Song 88.

We love thee, Lord, we praise thy name,
Who, by thy great almighty arm,
Hast kept us from the spoil and shame
Of those that sought our causeless harm:

Thou art our life, our triumph-song,
The joy and comfort of our heart;
To thee all praises do belong,
And thou the God of Armies art.

We must confess it is thy power
That made us masters of the field;
Thou art our bulwark and our tower,
Our rock of refuge and our shield:
Thou taught'st our hands and arms to fight;
With vigour thou didst gird us round;
Thou mad'st our foes to take their flight,
And thou didst beat them to the ground.

With fury came our armed foes,
To blood and slaughter fiercely bent;
And perils round did us inclose,
By whatsoever way we went;
That, hadst not thou our Captain been,
To lead us on, and off again,
We on the place had dead been seen,
Or masked in blood and wounds had lain.

This song we therefore sing to thee,
And pray that thou for evermore
Would'st our Protector deign to be,
As at this time and heretofore;
That thy continual favour shown
May cause us more to thee incline,
And make it through the world be known
That such as are our foes are thine.

Browne.

Along with Wither ought to be mentioned a contemporary poet of a genius, or at least of a manner, in some respects kindred to his, and whose fate it has been to experience the same long neglect, William Browne, the author of Britannia's Pastorals, of which the first part was published in 1613, the second in 1616, and of The Shepherd's Pipe in Seven Eclogues, which appeared in 1614. Browne was a native of Tavistock in Devonshire, where he was born in 1590, and he is supposed to have died in 1645. It is remarkable that, if he lived to so late a date, he should not have written more than he appears to have

done: the two parts of his Britannia's Pastorals were reprinted together in 1625; and a piece called The Inner Temple Masque, and a few short poems, were published for the first time in an edition of his works brought out, under the care of Dr. Farmer, in 1772; but the last thirty years of his life would seem, in so far as regards original production, to have been a blank. Yet a remarkable characteristic of his style, as well as of Wither's, is its ease and fluency; and it would appear, from what he says in one of the songs of his Pastorals, that he had written part of that work before he was twenty. His poetry certainly does not read as if its fountain would be apt soon to run dry. His facility of rhyming and command of harmonious expression are very great; and, within their proper sphere, his invention and fancy are also extremely active and fertile. His strength, however, lies chiefly in description, not the thing for which poetry or language is best fitted, and a species of writing which cannot be carried on long without becoming tiresome; he is also an elegant didactic declaimer; but of passion, or indeed of any breath of actual living humanity, his poetry has almost none. This, no doubt, was the cause of the neglect into which after a short time it was allowed to drop; and this limited quality of his genius may also very probably have been the reason why he so soon ceased to write and publish. From the time when religious and political contention began to wax high, in the latter years of King James, such poetry as Browne's had little chance of acceptance; from about that date Wither, as we have seen, who also had previously written his Shepherd's Hunting, and other similar pieces, took up a new strain; and Browne, if he was to continue to be listened to, must have done the same, which he either would not or could not. Yet, although without the versatility of Wither, and also with less vitality than Wither even in the kind of poetry which is common to the two, Browne rivals that writer both in the abundance of his poetic vein and the sweetness of his verse; and the English of the one has nearly all the purity, perspicuity, and unfading freshness of style which is so remarkable in the other. Here is a specimen from the reply of Remond to the love-tale of his brother shepherd, in the first Song of the first Book of Britannia's Pastorals:—

> — Have thy stars malign been such,
> That their predominations sway so much

Over the rest, that with a mild aspect
The lives and loves of shepherds do affect?
Then do I think there is some greater hand
Which thy endeavours still doth countermand.
Wherefore I wish thee quench the flame thus moved,
And never love except thou be beloved;
For such an humour every woman seizeth,
She loves not him that plaineth, but that pleaseth.
When much thou lovest, most disdain comes on thee;
And, when thou think'st to hold her, she flies from thee.
She, followed, flies; she, fled from, follows post,
And loveth best where she is hated most.
'Tis ever noted, both in maids and wives,
Their hearts and tongues are never relatives;—
Hearts full of holes (so elder shepherds sayn),
As apter to receive than to retain.
Whose crafts and wiles did I intend to show,
This day would not permit me time, I know:
The day's swift hours would their course have run,
And dived themselves within the ocean,
Ere I should have performed half my task,
Striving their crafty subtleties to unmask.
And, gentle swain, some counsel take of me:
Love not still where thou may'st; love who loves thee;
Draw to the courteous; fly thy love's abhorrer;
And, if she be not for thee, be not for her.
If that she still be wavering, will away,
Why should'st thou strive to hold what will not stay?
This maxim reason never can confute:—
Better to live by loss than die by suit.

. . . . . .

Favour and pity wait on patience;
And hatred oft attendeth violence.
If thou wilt get desire whence love hath pawned it,
Believe me, take thy time, but ne'er demand it.
Women, as well as men, retain desire,
But can dissemble more than men their fire.
Be never caught with looks, nor self-wrought rumour,
Nor by a quaint disguise, nor singing humour.
Those outside shows are toys which outwards snare;
But virtue, lodged within, is only fair.
If thou hast seen the beauty of our nation,
And find'st her have no love, have thou no passion;
But seek thou further: other places, sure,
May yield a face as fair, a love more pure.
Leave, oh then leave, fond swain, this idle course;
For love's a good no mortal wight can force.

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And here is another short extract from the second Song, exemplifying Browne's more habitual manner, on ground where all the descriptive poets have been competitors:—

Not all the ointments brought from Delos isle,
Nor from the confines of seven-headed Nile;
Nor that brought whence Phenicians have abodes;
Nor Cyprus' wild vine flower; nor that of Rhodes;
Nor rose's oil from Naples, Capua;
Saffron confected in Cilicia;
Nor that of quinces, nor of marjoram,
That ever from the isle of Coös came:
Nor thesë, nor any else, though ne'er so rare,
Could with this place for sweetest smells compare.
There stood the elm, whose shade, so mildly dim,
Doth nourish all that groweth under him:
Cypresses, that like pyramids run topping,
And hurt the least of any by their dropping:
The alder, whose fat shadow nourisheth;—
Each plant set near to him long flourisheth:
The heavy-headed plane-tree, by whose shade
The grass grows thickest, men are fresher made:
The oak that best endures the thunder-strokes:
The everlasting ebony, cedar, box:
The olive, that in wainscot never cleaves:
The amorous vine, which in the elm still weaves:
The lotus, juniper, where worms ne'er enter:
The pine, with whom men through the ocean venture:
The warlike yew, by which, more than the lance,
The strong-armed English spirits conquered France.
Amongst the rest the tamarisk there stood,
For housewives' besoms only known most good:
The cold-place-loving birch and service tree;
The walnut loving vales, and mulberry;
The maple, ash, that do delight in fountains
Which have their currents by the sides of mountains;
The laurel, myrtle, ivy, date, which hold
Their leaves all winter, be it ne'er so cold;
The fir, that often-times doth rosin drop;
The beech, that scales the welkin with his top.
All these, and thousand more, within this grove,
By all the industry of nature, strove
To frame an arbour, that might keep within it
The best of beauties that the world hath in it.

Prose Writers:—Charles I.

Most of the prose that was written and published in England in the middle portion of the seventeenth century, or the twenty years preceding the Restoration, was political and theological, but very little of it has any claim to be considered as belonging to the national literature. A torrent of pamphlets and ephemeral polemics supplied the ravenous public appetite with a mental sustenance which answered the wants of the moment, much as the bakers' ovens did with daily bread for the body. It was all devoured, and meant to be devoured, as fast as it was produced —devoured in the sense of being quite used up and consumed, so far as any good was to be got out of it. It was in no respect intended for posterity, any more than the linen and broad-cloth then manufactured were intended for posterity. Still even this busy and excited time produced some literary performances which still retain more or less of interest.

The writings attributed to Charles I. were first collected and published at the Hague soon after his death, in a folio volume without date, under the title of Reliquiæ Sacræ Carolinæ, and twice afterwards in England, namely, in 1660 and 1687, with the title of ΒΑΣΙΛΙΚΑ: The Works of King Charles the Martyr. If we except a number of speeches to the parliament, letters, despatches, and other political papers, the contents of this collection are all theological, consisting of prayers, arguments, and disquisitions on the controversy about church government, and the famous Eikon Basiliké, or, The Portraiture of his Sacred Majesty in his Solitude and Sufferings; which, having been printed under the care of Dr. Gauden (after the Restoration successively bishop of Exeter and Worcester), had been first published by itself immediately after the king's execution. It is now generally admitted that the Eikon was really written by Gauden, who, after the Restoration, openly claimed it as his own. Mr. Hallam, however, although he has no doubt of Gauden being the author, admits that it is, nevertheless, superior to his acknowledged writings. "A strain of majestic melancholy," he observes, "is well kept up; but the personated sovereign is rather too theatrical for real nature; the language is too rhetorical and amplified, the periods too artificially elaborated. None but scholars and practised writers employ such a style as

this."* It is not improbable that the work may have been submitted to Charles's revisal, and that it may have received both his approval and his corrections. Charles, indeed, was more in the habit of correcting what had been written by others than of writing anything himself. "Though he was of as slow a pen as of speech," says Sir Philip Warwick, "yet both were very significant; and he had that modest esteem of his own parts, that he would usually say, he would willingly make his own despatches, but that he found it better to be a cobbler than a shoemaker. I have been in company with very learned men, when I have brought them their own papers back from him with his alterations, who ever confessed his amendments to have been very material. And I once, by his commandment, brought him a paper of my own to read, to see whether it was suitable to his directions, and he disallowed it slightingly: I desired him I might call Dr. Sanderson to aid me, and that the doctor might understand his own meaning from himself; and, with his majesty's leave, I brought him whilst he was walking and taking the air; whereupon we two went back; but pleased him as little when we returned it: for, smilingly, he said, a man might have as good ware out of a chandler's shop; but afterwards he set it down with his own pen very plainly, and suitably to his own intentions." The most important of the literary productions which are admitted to be wholly Charles's own, are his papers in the controversy which he carried on at Newcastle in June and July, 1646, with Alexander Henderson, the Scotch clergyman, on the question between episcopacy and presbytery, and those on the same subject in his controversy with the parliamentary divines at Newport in October, 1648. These papers show considerable clearness of thinking and logical or argumentative talent; but it cannot be said that they are written with any force or elegance. It is not easy to understand the meaning of Horace Walpole's judgment on Charles's style, that "it was formed between a certain portion of sense, adversity, dignity, and perhaps a little insincerity."† What he says of a copy of verses said to have been written by his majesty during his confinement in Carisbrook Castle is more to the purpose: "The poetry is most uncouth and inharmonious; but there are strong thoughts in it, some good sense, and a strain of majestic piety." Though not very polished, indeed, or very like the

* Lit. of Eur. iii. 376. † Royal and Noble Authors.

production of a practised versifier, which goes so far to furnish a presumption of its authenticity, this composition, which is entitled Majesty in Misery, or an Imploration to the King of Kings, indicates poetic feeling, and an evident familiarity with the highest models. Here are a few of its more striking verses:—

Nature and law, by thy divine decree
The only sort of righteous royalty,
With this dim diadem invested me.

. . . . . .

The fiercest furies, that do daily tread
Upon my grief, my gray discrowned head,
Are those that owe my bounty for their bread.

. . . . . .

The Church of England doth all faction foster,
The pulpit is usurped by each impostor;
Extempore excludes the *Pater Noster*.

The Presbyter and Independent seed
Springs with broad blades; to make religion bleed
Herod and Pontius Pilate are agreed.

The corner-stone's misplaced by every paviour:
With such a bloody method and behaviour
Their ancestors did crucify our Saviour.

. . . . . .

With my own power my majesty they wound;
In the king's name the king himself's uncrowned;
So doth the dust destroy the diamond.

MILTON'S PROSE WORKS.

We have already mentioned Bishop Hall, both as a poet and as a writer of prose. A part which Hall took in his old age in the grand controversy of the time brought him into collision with one with whose name in after ages the world was to resound. John Milton, then in his thirty-third year, and recently returned from his travels in France and Italy, had already, in 1641, lent the aid of his pen to the war of the Puritans against the established church by the publication of his treatise entitled Of Reformation, in Two Books. The same year Hall published his Humble Remonstrance in favour of

Episcopacy; which immediately called forth an Answer by Smectymnuus,—a word formed from the initial letters of the names of five Puritan ministers by whom the tract was written —Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William (or, as he was on this occasion reduced to designate himself, Uuilliam) Spurstow. The Answer produced a Confutation by Archbishop Usher; and to this Milton replied in a treatise entitled Of Prelatical Episcopacy. Hall then published a Defence of the Humble Remonstrance; and Milton wrote Animadversions upon that. About the same time he also brought out a performance of much greater pretension, under the title of The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty, in Two Books. This is the work containing the magnificent passage in which he makes the announcement of his intention to attempt something in one of the highest kinds of poetry "in the mother-tongue," long afterwards accomplished in his great epic. Meanwhile a Confutation of the Animadversions having been published by Bishop Hall, or his son, Milton replied, in 1642, in an Apology for Smectymnuus, which was the last of his publications in this particular controversy. But, nearly all his other prose writings were given to the world within the period with which we are now engaged:—namely, his Tractate of Education, addressed to his friend Hartlib, and his noble Areopagitica, a Speech for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing, in 1644; his Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce, and his Judgment of Martin Bucer concerning Divorce, the same year; his Tetrachordon, and Colasterion (both on the same subject) in 1645; his Tenure of Kings and Magistrates, his Eikonoclastes, in answer to the Eikon Basilike, and one or two other tracts of more temporary interest, all after the execution of the king, in 1649; his Defence for the People of England, in answer to Salmasius (in Latin), in 1651; his Second Defence (also in Latin), in reply to a work by Peter du Moulin, in 1654; two additional Latin tracts in reply to rejoinders of Du Moulin, in 1655; his treatises on Civil Power in Ecclesiastical Cases, and on The Means of Removing Hirelings out of the Church, in 1659; his Letter concerning the Ruptures of the Commonwealth, and Brief Delineation of a Free Commonwealth, the same year; and, finally, his Ready and Easy Way to establish a Free Commonwealth, and his Brief Notes upon a Sermon preached by Dr. Griffith, called The Fear of God and the King,

in the spring of 1660, immediately before the king's return. Passages of great poetic splendour occur in some of these productions, and a fervid and fiery spirit breathes in all of them, though the animation is as apt to take the tone of mere coarse objurgation and abuse as of lofty and dignified scorn or of vigorous argument; but, upon the whole, it cannot be said that Milton's English prose is a good style. It is in the first place, not perhaps in vocabulary, but certainly in genius and construction, the most Latinized of English styles; but it does not merit the commendation bestowed by Pope on another style which he conceived to be formed after the model of the Roman eloquence, of being "so Latin, yet so English all the while." It is both soul and body Latin, only in an English dress. Owing partly to this principle of composition upon which he deliberately proceeded, or to the adoption of which his education and tastes or habits led him, partly to the character of his mind, fervid, gorgeous, and soaring, but having little involuntary impulsiveness or self-abandonment, rich as his style often is, it never moves with any degree of rapidity or easy grace even in passages where such qualities are most required, but has at all times something of a stiff, cumbrous, oppressive air, as if every thought, the lightest and most evanescent as well as the gravest and stateliest, were attired in brocade and whalebone. There is too little relief from constant straining and striving; too little repose and variety; in short, too little nature. Many things, no doubt, are happily said; there is much strong and also some brilliant expression; but even such imbedded gems do not occur so often as might be looked for from so poetical a mind. In fine, we must admit the truth of what he has himself confessed—that he was not naturally disposed to "this manner of writing;" "wherein," he adds, "knowing myself inferior to myself, led by the genial power of nature to another task, I have the use, as I may account it, but of my left hand." * With all his quick susceptibility for whatever was beautiful and bright, Milton seems to have needed the soothing influences of the regularity and music of verse fully to bring out his poetry, or to sublimate his imagination to the true poetical state. The passion which is an enlivening flame in his verse half suffocates him with its smoke in his prose.

* Reason of Church Government, Book II.

Hales; Chillingworth.

Two other eminent names of theological controversialists belonging to this troubled age of the English church may be mentioned together—those of John Hales and William Chillingworth. Hales, who was born in 1584, and died in 1656, the same year with Hall and Usher, published in his lifetime a few short tracts, of which the most important is a Discourse on Schism, which was printed in 1642, and is considered to have been one of the works that led the way in that bold revolt against the authority of the fathers, so much cried up by the preceding school of Andrews and Laud, upon which has since been founded what many hold to be the strongest defence of the Church of England against that of Rome. All Hales's writings were collected and published after his death, in 1659, in a quarto volume, bearing the title of Golden Remains of the Ever-Memorable Mr. John Hales,—a designation which has stuck to his name. The main idea of his treatise on Schism had, however, been much more elaborately worked out by his friend Chillingworth—the Immortal Chillingworth, as he is styled by his admirers—in his famous work entitled The Religion of Protestants a Safe Way to Salvation, published in 1637. This is one of the most closely and keenly argued polemical treatises ever written: the style in which Chillingworth presses his reasoning home is like a charge with the bayonet. He was still only in his early manhood when he produced this remarkably able work; and he died in 1644 at the age of forty-two.

Jeremy Taylor.

But the greatest name by far among the English divines of the middle of the seventeenth century is that of Jeremy Taylor. He was born in 1613, and died bishop of Down and Connor in 1667; but most of his works were written, and many of them were also published, before the Restoration. In abundance of thought; in ingenuity of argument; in opulence of imagination; in a soul made alike for the feeling of the sublime, of the beautiful, and of the picturesque; and in a style, answering in its

compass, flexibility, and sweetness to the demands of all these powers, Taylor is unrivalled among the masters of English eloquence. He is the Spenser of our prose writers; and his prose is sometimes almost as musical as Spenser's verse. His Sermons, his Golden Grove, his Holy Living, and, still more, his Holy Dying, all contain many passages, the beauty and splendour of which are hardly to be matched in any other English prose writer. Another of his most remarkable works, Theologia Eclectica, a Discourse of the Liberty of Prophesying, first published in 1647, may be placed beside Milton's Areopagitica, published three years before, as doing for liberty of conscience the same service which that did for the liberty of the press. Both remain the most eloquent and comprehensive defences we yet possess of these two great rights.

Fuller.

The last of the theological writers of this era that we shall notice is Fuller. Dr. Thomas Fuller was born in 1604, and died in 1661; and in the course of his not very extended life produced a considerable number of literary works, of which his Church History of Britain from the Birth of Jesus Christ until the Year 1648, which appeared in 1656, and his History of the Worthies of England, which was not published till the year after his death, are the most important. He is a most singular writer, full of verbal quibbling and quaintness of all kinds, but by far the most amusing and engaging of all the rhetoricians of this school, inasmuch as his conceits are rarely mere elaborate feats of ingenuity, but are usually informed either by a strong spirit of very peculiar humour and drollery, or sometimes even by a warmth and depth of feeling, of which too, strange as it may appear, the oddity of his phraseology is often a not ineffective exponent. He was certainly one of the greatest and truest wits that ever lived: he is witty not by any sort of effort at all, but as it were in spite of himself, or because he cannot help it. But wit, or the faculty of looking at and presenting things in their less obvious relations, is accompanied in him, not only by humour and heart, but by a considerable endowment of the irradiating power of fancy. Accordingly, what he writes is always

lively and interesting, and sometimes even eloquent and poetical, though the eccentricities of his characteristic manner are not favourable, it must be confessed, to dignity or solemnity of style when attempted to be long sustained. Fuller, and it is no wonder, was one of the most popular writers, if not the most popular, of his own day: he observes himself, in the opening chapter of his Worthies, that hitherto no stationer (or publisher) had lost by him; and what happened in regard to one of his works, his Holy State, is perhaps without example in the history of book-publishing:—it appeared originally in a folio volume in 1642, and is believed to have been four times reprinted before the Restoration; but the publisher continued to describe the two last impressions on the title-page as still only the *third* edition, as if the demand had been so great that he felt (for whatever reason) unwilling that its extent should be known. It is conjectured that his motive probably was "a desire to lull suspicion, and not to invite prohibition from the ruling powers."*

Hardly anything can be found in Fuller that is dull or wearisome; and we may therefore safely indulge in a few extracts. We will begin with some passages from his Worthies, interesting or curious either for the manner or the matter:—

Chapter I. The Design of the ensuing Work.—England may not unfitly be compared to an House, not very great, but convenient; and the several Shires may properly be resembled to the rooms thereof. Now, as learned Master Camden, and painful Master Speed, with others, have described the rooms themselves; so it is our intention, God willing, to describe the furniture of those rooms; such eminent commodities which every county doth produce, with the persons of quality bred therein, and some other observables coincident with the same subject.

Cato, that great and grave philosopher, did commonly demand, when any new project was propounded unto him, "Cui bono?" What good would ensue in case the same was effected. A question more fit to be asked than facile to be answered, in all undertakings, especially in the setting forth of new books, insomuch that they themselves who complain that they are too many already help daily to make them more.

Know, then, I propound five ends to myself in this book. First, to gain some glory to God. Secondly, to preserve the memories of the Dead. Thirdly, to present examples to the Living. Fourthly, to entertain the Reader with delight. And lastly (which I am not ashamed publicly to profess), to procure some honest profit to Myself. If not so happy to obtain all, I will be joyful to attain some; yea, contented, and thankful too, if

* Preface by the Editor, Mr. James Nichols, to The Holy State. 8vo. Lon. 1841.

gaining any (especially the first) of these ends, the motives of my endeavours.

First, glory to God, which ought to be the aim of all our actions, though too often our bow starts, our hand shakes, and so our arrow misseth the mark. Yet I hope that our describing so good a land, with the various fruits and fruitful varieties therein, will engage both writer and reader in gratitude to that God who hath been so bountiful to our nation. In order whereunto, I have not only always taken, but often sought, occasions to exhort to thankfulness; hoping the same will be interpreted no straggling from my subject, but a closing with my calling.

Secondly, to preserve the memories of the Dead. A good name is an ointment poured out, smelt where it is not seen. It hath been the lawful desire of men in all ages to perpetuate their memories, thereby in some sort revenging themselves of mortality, though few have found out effectual means to perform it. For monuments made of wood are subject to be burnt; of glass, to be broken; of soft stone, to moulder; of marble and metal (if escaping the teeth of time), to be demolished by the hand of covetousness; so that, in my apprehension, the safest way to secure a memory from oblivion is (next his own virtues) by committing the same in writing to posterity.

Thirdly, to present examples to the Living; having here precedents of all sorts and sizes; of men famous for valour, wealth, wisdom, learning, religion, and bounty to the public, on which last we most largely insist. The scholar, being taxed by his writing-master for idleness in his absence, made a fair defence when pleading that his master had neither left him paper whereon, nor copy whereby, to write. But rich men will be without excuse, if not expressing their bounty in some proportion; God having provided them paper enough ("The poor you have always with you") and set them signal examples, as in our ensuing work will plainly appear.

Fourthly, to entertain the Reader with delight. I confess the subject is but dull in itself, to tell the time and place of men's birth and death, their names, with the names and number of their books; and therefore this bare skeleton, of time, place, and person, must be fleshed with some pleasant passages. To this intent I have purposely interlaced (not as meat, but as condiment) many delightful stories, that so the Reader, if he do not arise (which I hope and desire) *religiosior* or *doctior*, with more piety or learning, at least he may depart *jucundior*, with more pleasure and lawful delight.

Lastly, to procure moderate profit to Myself, in compensation of my pains. It was a proper question which plain-dealing Jacob pertinently propounded to Laban, his father-in-law: "And now when shall I provide for mine house also?" Hitherto no stationer hath lost by me; hereafter it will be high time for me (all things considered) to save for myself.

The following passages are from the account of Middlesex:—

Leather.—This, though common to all counties, is entered under the manufactures of Middlesex, because London therein is the staple place of

slaughter; and the hides of beasts there bought are generally tanned about Enfield in this county.

A word of the antiquity and usefulness of this commodity. Adam's first suit was of leaves, his second of leather. Hereof girdles, shoes, and many utensils (not to speak of whole houses of leather, I mean coaches) are made. Yea, I have read how Frederick the Second, Emperor of Germany, distressed to pay his army, made *monetam coriaceam*, coin of leather, making it current by his proclamation; and afterward, when his soldiers repaid it into his exchequer, they received so much silver in lieu thereof.

Many good laws are made (and still one wanting to enforce the keeping of them) for the making of this merchantable commodity; and yet still much unsaleable leather is sold in our markets.

The Lord Treasurer Burleigh, who always consulted artificers in their own art, was indoctrinated by a cobbler in the true tanning of leather. This cobbler, taking a slice of bread, toasted it by degrees at some distance from the fire, turning it many times till it became brown and hard on both sides. "This, my lord," saith he, "we good fellows call a tanned toast, done so well that it will last many mornings' draughts; and leather thus leisurely tanned, and turned many times in the fat [vat], will prove serviceable, which otherwise will quickly fleet and rag out." And, although that great statesman caused statutes to be made according to his instructions, complaints in this kind daily continue and increase. Surely, were all that occupation as honest as Simon the Tanner, the entertainer of Simon Peter in Joppa, they would be more conscientious in their calling. Let me add, what experience proveth true, though it be hard to assign the true cause thereof, that, when wheat is dear, leather always is cheap; and when leather is dear, then wheat is cheap.

The Buildings.—. . . . Osterly House, now Sir William Waller's, must not be forgotten, built in a park by Sir Thomas Gresham, who here magnificently entertained and lodged Queen Elizabeth. Her majesty found fault with the court of this house as too great; affirming that it would appear more handsome if divided with a wall in the middle. What doth Sir Thomas, but in the night-time sends for workmen to London (money commands all things), who so speedily and silently apply their business that the next morning discovered that court double, which the night had left single before. It is questionable whether the Queen next day was more contented with the conformity to her fancy, or more pleased with the surprise and sudden performance thereof; whilst her courtiers disported themselves with their several expressions; some avowing it was no wonder he could so soon change a building who could build a change; others (reflecting on some known differences in this knight's family) affirmed that any house is easier divided than united.

London.—It oweth its greatness, under God's divine providence, to the well-conditioned river of Thames, which doth not, as some tyrant rivers in Europe, abuse its strength in a destructive way, but employeth its greatness in goodness, to be beneficial to commerce by the reciprocation of the tide therein. Hence it was that, when King James, offended with the city, threatened to remove his court to another place, the Lord Mayor (boldly

enough) returned, that he might remove his court at his pleasure, but could not remove the river of Thames.

Needles.—The use hereof is right ancient, though sewing was before needles; for we read that our first parents made themselves aprons by sewing fig-leaves together, either fastening them with some glutinous matter, or with some sharp thing joining them together.

A pin is a blind needle; a needle, a pin with an eye. What nails do in solid, needles do in supple bodies, putting them together; only they remain not there formally, but virtually in the thread which they leave behind them. It is the woman's pencil; and embroidery (*vestis acu picta*) is the master-piece thereof. I say embroidery, much used in former, neglected in our age, wherein modern gallants, affecting variety of suits, desire that their clothes should be known by them, and not, as our ancestors, they by their clothes, one suit of state serving them for several solemnities.

This industrious instrument, Needle (*quasi ne idle*, as some will have it), maintaineth many millions. Yea, he who desireth a blessing on the plough and the needle (including that in the card and compass), comprehendeth most employments at home and abroad, by land and by sea.

All I will add is this: that the first fine Spanish needles in England were made in the reign of Queen Mary, in Cheapside, by a negro; but such his envy that he would teach his art to none, so that it died with him. More charitable was Elias Crowse, a German, who, coming over into England about the eighth of Queen Elizabeth, first taught us the making of Spanish needles; and since we have taught ourselves the using of them.

The following interesting passage, often referred to, is from the account of Warwickshire:—

William Shakespeare was born at Stratford on Avon in this county; in whom three eminent poets may seem in some sort to be compounded: 1. Martial, in the warlike sound of his surname (whence some may conjecture him of a military extraction), Hastivibrans, or Shakespeare. 2. Ovid, the most natural and witty of all poets; and hence it was that Queen Elizabeth, coming into a grammar-school, made this extemporary verse,

"Persius a Crabstaff, Bawdy Martial, Ovid a fine wag."

3. Plautus, who was an exact comedian, yet never any scholar; as our Shakespeare, if alive, would confess himself. Add to all these, that, though his genius generally was jocular, and inclining him to festivity, yet he could, when so disposed, be solemn and serious, as appears by his tragedies; so that Heraclitus himself (I mean if secret and unseen) might afford to smile at his comedies, they were so merry; and Democritus scarce forbear to sigh at his tragedies, they were so mournful.

He was an eminent instance of the truth of that rule, *Poeta non fit, sed nascitur*; one is not made, but born a poet. Indeed his learning was very little, so that, as Cornish diamonds are not polished by any lapidary, but are pointed, and smoothed even, as they are taken out of the earth, so nature itself was all the art which was used upon him.

Many were the wit combats betwixt him and Ben Jonson. Which two I behold like a Spanish great galleon and an English man-of-war. Master Jonson, like the former, was built far higher in learning; solid, but slow, in his performances. Shakespeare, with the English man-of-war, lesser in bulk, but lighter in sailing, could turn with all tides, tack about, and take advantage of all winds, by the quickness of his wit and invention. He died anno Domini 16. . , and was buried at Stratford upon Avon, the town of his nativity.

This last paragraph calls to mind a famous passage in a poetical epistle written from the country by Francis Beaumont to Ben Jonson, very early in the century, it is said, but not published, we believe, till it appeared in Shirley's edition of the collected plays of Beaumont and Fletcher in 1647, so that it could not have suggested Fuller's description:—

Methinks the little wit I had is lost
Since I saw you; for wit is like a rest
Held up at tennis, which men do the best
With the best gamesters.[1] What things have we seen
Done at the Mermaid! heard words that have been
So nimble, and so full of subtile flame,
As if that every one from whence they came
Had meant to put his whole wit in a jest,
And had resolved to live a fool the rest
Of his dull life; then, when there hath been thrown
Wit able enough to justify the town
For three days past; wit that might warrant be
For the whole city to talk foolishly
Till that were cancelled; and, when that was gone,
We left an air behind us, which alone
Was able to make the two next companies
Right witty; though but downright fools, mere wise.

We may add another Warwickshire worthy, of a different order:—

Philemon Holland, where born is to me unknown, was bred in Trinity College in Cambridge a Doctor in Physic, and fixed himself in Coventry. He was the translator general in his age, so that those books alone of his turning into English will make a country gentleman a competent library for historians; in so much that one saith,

"Holland with his translations doth so fill us,
He will not let *Suetonius* be *Tranquillus*."

[1] So Samuel Johnson said that he loved to converse with those who were able to send him back every ball that he threw.

Indeed, some decry all translators as interlopers, spoiling the trade of learning, which should be driven amongst scholars alone. Such also allege that the best translations are works rather of industry than judgment, and, in easy authors, of faithfulness rather than industry; that many be but bunglers, forcing the meaning of the authors they translate, "forcing the lock when they cannot open it."

But their opinion resents too much of envy, that such gentlemen who cannot repair to the fountain should be debarred access to the stream. Besides, it is unjust to charge all with the faults of some; and a distinction must be made amongst translators betwixt cobblers and workmen, and our Holland had the true *knack* of translating.

Many of these his books he wrote with one pen, whereon he himself thus pleasantly versified:—

"With one sole pen I writ this book,
Made of a grey goose quill;
A pen it was when it I took,
And a pen I leave it still."

This monumental pen he solemnly kept, and showed to my reverend tutor, Doctor Samuel Ward. It seems he leaned very lightly on the neb thereof, though weightily enough in another sense, performing not slightly but solidly what he undertook.

But what commendeth him most to the praise of posterity is his translating Camden's Britannia, a translation more than a translation, with many excellent additions not found in the Latin, done fifty years since in Master Camden's lifetime, not only with his knowledge and consent, but also, no doubt, by his desire and help. Yet such additions (discoverable in the former part with asterisks in the margent) with some antiquaries obtain not equal authenticalness with the rest. This eminent translator was translated to a better life anno Domini 16 . . .

The translation of the translator took place in fact in 1636, when he had reached the venerable age of eighty-five, so that translating would seem to be not an unhealthy occupation. The above sketch is Fuller all over, in heart as well as in head and hand—the last touch especially, which, jest though it be, and upon a solemn subject, falls as gently and kindly as a tear on good old Philemon and his labours. The effect is as if we were told that even so gently fell the touch of death itself upon the ripe old man—even so easy, natural, and smiling, his labours over, was his leave-taking and exchange of this earth of many languages, the confusion or discord of which he had done his best to reduce, for that better world, where there is only one tongue, and translation is not needed or known. And Fuller's wit and jesting are always of this character; they have not in them a particle either of bitterness or of irreverence. No man

ever (in writing at least) made so many jokes, good, bad, and indifferent; be the subject what it may, it does not matter; in season and out of season he is equally facetious; he cannot let slip an occasion of saying a good thing any more than a man who is tripped can keep himself from falling; the habit is as irresistible with him as the habit of breathing; and yet there is probably neither an ill-natured nor a profane witticism to be found in all that he has written. It is the sweetest-blooded wit that was ever infused into man or book. And how strong and weighty, as well as how gentle and beautiful, much of his writing is! The work perhaps in which he is oftenest eloquent and pathetic is that entitled The Holy State and the Profane State, the former great popularity of which we have already noticed. It consists in fact of a series of moral, theological, and miscellaneous essays, interspersed with narratives, the first four books being occupied with the Holy State, the fifth with the Profane, many of the papers being delineations of different characters, such as the Good Wife, the Good Husband, the Good Physician, the Good Merchant, the Good Herald, under the former head,—the Witch, the Hypocrite, the Heretic, the Liar, under the latter. Almost no writer whatever tells a story so well as Fuller —with so much life and point and gusto. The narratives, however, of the Holy and Profane State, are all too long for extract; and, in selecting from that work the last specimens we can afford to give of this admirable old writer, we must confine ourselves to a few passages that admit of being more easy separated from the context. We will begin with some from his chapter entitled The Good Soldier:—

A soldier is one of a lawful, necessary, commendable, and honourable profession; yea, God himself may seem to be one free of the company of soldiers, in that he styleth himself a "Man of War." Now, though many hate soldiers as the twigs of the rod war, wherewith God scourgeth wanton countries into repentance, yet is their calling so needful that, were not *some* soldiers, we must be *all* soldiers, daily employed to defend our own, the world would grow so licentious.

Maxim I. He keepeth a clear and quiet conscience in his breast, which otherwise will gnaw out the roots of all valour.—For vicious soldiers are compassed with enemies on all sides; their foes without them, and an ambush within them of fleshly lusts, which, as St. Peter saith, "fight against the soul." None fitter to go to war than those who have made their peace with God in Christ. For such a man's soul is an impregnable fort. It cannot be scaled with ladders, for it reacheth up to heaven; nor be broken with batteries, for it is walled with brass; nor undermined by

pioneers, for it is founded on a rock; nor betrayed by treason, for faith itself keeps it; nor be burnt by granadoes, for he can quench the fiery darts of the devil; nor be forced by famine, for "a good conscience is a continual feast."

Maxim III. He counts his prince's lawful command to be his sufficient warrant to fight.—In a defensive war, when his country is hostilely invaded, it is pity but *his* neck should hang in suspense with his conscience, that doubts to fight. In offensive war, though the case be harder, the common soldier is not to dispute, but do, his prince's command. Otherwise princes, before they levy an army of soldiers, must first levy an army of casuists and confessors to satisfy each scrupulous soldier in point of right to the war; and the most cowardly will be the most conscientious, to multiply doubts eternally. Besides, causes of war are so complicated and perplexed, so many things falling in the prosecution, as may alter the original state thereof; and private soldiers have neither calling nor ability to dive into such mysteries. But, if the conscience of a counsellor or commander in chief remonstrates in himself the unlawfulness of this war he is bound humbly to represent to his prince his reasons against it.

Maxim IV. He esteemeth an hardship easy, through hopes of victory. —Moneys are the sinews of war;[1] yet, if these sinews should chance to be shrunk, and pay casually fall short, he takes a fit of this convulsion patiently. He is contented though in cold weather his hands must be their own fire, and warm themselves with working; though he be better armed against their enemies than the weather, and his corslet wholer than his clothes; though he hath more fasts and vigils in his almanac than the Romish church did ever enjoin. He patiently endureth drought, for desire of honour; and one thirst quencheth another. In a word, though much indebted to his own back and belly, and unable to pay them, yet he hath credit himself, and confidently runs on ticket with himself, hoping the next victory will discharge all scores with advantage.

Along with this we will give the concluding head of the next chapter, entitled The Good Sea Captain, which is very characteristic:—

He daily sees and duly considers God's wonders in the deep.—Tell me, ye naturalists, who sounded the first march and retreat to the tide, "Hither shalt thou come, and no further?" Why doth not the water recover his right over the earth, being higher in nature? Whence came the salt, and who first boiled it, which made so much brine? When the winds are not only wild in a storm, but even stark mad in an hurricane, who is it that restores them again to their wits, and brings them asleep in a calm? Who made the mighty whales, which swim in a sea of water, and have a sea of oil swimming in them? Who first taught the water to imitate the creatures on land, so that the sea is the stable of horse-fishes,

[1] "Then to advise how War may, best upheld,
Move by her two main nerves, iron and gold."
Milton, Sonnet to the Younger Vane.

the stall of kine-fishes, the sty of hog-fishes, the kennel of dog-fishes, and in all things the sea the ape of the land? Whence grows the ambergris in the sea? which is not so hard to find where it is as to know what it is. Was not God the first shipwright? and all vessels on the water descended from the loins (or ribs rather) of Noah's ark? or else, who durst be so bold, with a few crooked boards nailed together, a stick standing upright, and a rag tied to it, to adventure into the ocean? What loadstone first touched the loadstone? Or how first fell it in love with the North, rather affecting that cold climate than the pleasant East, or fruitful South or West? How comes that stone to know more than men, and find the way to the land in a mist? In most of these men take sanctuary at *occulta qualitas* [some hidden quality]; and complain that the room is dark, when their eyes are blind. Indeed, they are God's wonders; and that seaman the greatest wonder of all for his blockishness, who, seeing them daily, neither takes notice of them, admires at them, nor is thankful for them.

Our last extract shall be the conclusion of his eloquent sketch of the Life of Bishop Ridley:—

His whole life was a letter written full of learning and religion, whereof his death was the seal. . . . . Old Hugh Latimer was Ridley's partner at the stake, some time Bishop of Worcester, who crawled thither after him; one who had lost more learning than many ever had who flout at his plain sermons, though his downright style was as necessary in that age as it would be ridiculous in ours. Indeed, he condescended to people's capacity; and many men unjustly count those low in learning who indeed do but stoop to their auditors. Let me see any of our sharp wits do that with the edge, which his bluntness did with the back, of the knife, and persuade so many to restitution of ill-gotten goods. Though he came after Ridley to the stake, he got before him to heaven: his body, made tinder by age, was no sooner touched by the fire, but instantly this old Simeon had his *Nunc dimittis*, and brought the news to heaven that his brother was following after. But Ridley suffered with far more pain, the fire about him being not well made; and yet one would think that age should be skilful in making such bonfires, as being much practised in them. The gunpowder that was given him did little service; and his brother-in-law, out of desire to rid him out of pain, increased it (great grief will not give men leave to be wise with it!) heaping fuel upon him to no purpose; so that neither the faggots which his enemies' anger, nor his brother's good will, cast upon him, made the fire to burn kindly.

In like manner, not much before, his dear friend Master Hooper suffered with great torment; the wind (which too often is the bellows of great fires) blowing it away from him once or twice. Of all the Martyrs in those days, these two endured most pain; it being true that each of them *Quaerebat in ignibus ignes*—And still he did desire for fire in midst of fire;—both desiring to burn, and yet both their upper parts were but Confessors when their lower parts were Martyrs and burnt to ashes. Thus God, where he hath given the stronger faith, he layeth on the stronger pain. And so we leave them going up to heaven, like Elijah, in a chariot of fire.

Feltham's Resolves,—Microcosmography.

This volume of Fuller's, The Holy and the Profane State, may be considered as belonging to a class of books the best of which seem to have been more popular than any other works, out of the region of poetry and fiction, among our ancestors of the seventeenth century. Bacon's Essays, for instance, which first appeared in 1597, were reprinted in 1606, in 1612, in 1613, and in 1625, during the lifetime of the author; and after his death new editions were still more rapidly called for. Another favourite volume of this kind was the Resolves, Divine, Moral, and Political, of Owen Feltham, the first edition of which has the date of 1628, and of which there were re-impressions in 1631, in 1634, in 1636, in 1647, in 1661, in 1670, in 1677, and in 1696. Feltham tells us himself that a portion of his book was written when he was only eighteen; and from this statement it has been conjectured that he was probably born about 1610: he is supposed to have been still alive when the 1677 edition of his Resolves came out. Very little more is known of his history than that he appears to have resided for the greater part of his life in the house of the Earl of Thomond—in quality of gentleman of the horse or secretary, Oldys says, on the contemporary report of Mr. William Loughton, schoolmaster in Kensington, who was related to Feltham. The later editions of the Resolves are dedicated to the Countess of Thomond, a daughter of Sir George Fermor (ancestor of the Earls of Pomfret); and the author in his address states that most of them were drawn up under her roof. The work is divided into two Parts or Centuries (the last being that first written and published); and consists of a hundred and forty-six short papers or essays on moral and theological subjects. Like those of Bacon, most of Feltham's essays have a practical character or object, aiming, in Bacon's own phrase, to carry home some useful truth or maxim to the business and bosoms of their readers; they are, what Bacon expressly calls his, Counsels, Civil and Moral; and hence no doubt in great part the acceptance they met with. The difference of the times, however, as well as of the writers, is evidenced by the more decidedly religious spirit which leavens Feltham's book. It is the spirit which was generally prevalent in England for the quarter of a century before the breaking out

of the civil war—neither High Church nor Puritan, but yet decidedly a spirit of attachment both to the essential doctrines of Christianity and to the peculiar system of the Established Church. It was a state of feeling which in more excited times would be called lukewarm; but it was sincerely opposed to all licentiousness or irregularity both of conduct and opinion, and was firmly though not passionately both moral and Christian. It was in short the sort of religious feeling natural to tranquil and tolerably prosperous times; and Feltham's work is an exact representative of its character and the extent of its views. The work therefore was fortunate in hitting the reigning taste or fashion; but it was also a work of remarkable ability—not indeed presenting the subtle inquisition and large speculation in which the Essays of Bacon abound, but still full of ingenious and sagacious remarks, always clearly, sometimes strikingly, expressed. Like all writers who have ever been long popular, indeed, Feltham owed half his success to his style—to a shaping of his thoughts which set their substance off to the best advantage, or at the very least enabled what of justness or worth was in them to be most clearly and readily apprehended. There is little or nothing, however, of poetry or picturesqueness in Feltham's writing; it is clear, manly, and sufficiently expressive, but has no peculiar raciness or felicity. Another preceding work that still more resembles Fuller's is the little volume entitled Microcosmography, or a Piece of the World Discovered, in Essays and characters, which in recent times has been usually ascribed to Dr. John Earle, who after the Restoration was made bishop, first of Worcester and then of Salisbury, though it does not appear upon what sufficient evidence. All that we can gather upon the point from Dr. Bliss's excellent modern edition (8vo. Lon. 1811) is that the editor of the previous edition of 1786 states himself to have lately discovered that the work was written by Bishop Earle, "from very good authority." "I regret extremely," says Dr. Bliss, in a note, "that I am unable to put the reader in possession of this very acute discoverer's name." The work, by a mistake originating with Langbaine, in his Dramatic Poets, had formerly been attributed to Edward Blount, its first publisher, who was a bookseller in St. Paul's Churchyard, and also a man of letters. He was, to the honour, as Dr. Bliss observes, of his taste and judgment, one of the partners in the first edition of the plays of Shakespeare. Earle is the author of

a Latin version of the Eikon Basilike, published at the Hague in 1649; he is said to have also translated Hooker's Ecclesiastical Polity into the same language; he appears to have had in early life a high reputation both for classic learning and skill in English verse; but, with the exception of the Microcosmography, his only other performances that are now known to exist are three short elegies, which Dr. Bliss has printed. He died in 1665, and was probably born about the beginning of the century. The Microcosmography was first printed in 1628; a second edition, "much enlarged," came out in 1629, printed for Robert Alcot, the publisher of the second (1632) folio edition of Shakespeare; the next mentioned by Dr. Bliss is a sixth, also printed for Alcot, in 1633; there was a seventh in 1638; after which the demand for the book seems to have been interrupted by the national confusions; but an eighth edition of it appeared in 1650. The style of the Microcosmography is much more antique and peculiar than that of Feltham's Resolves; and the subjects are also of more temporary interest, which may account for its having earlier dropt into comparative neglect. It is not only highly curious, however, as a record of the manners and customs of our ancestors, but is marked by strong graphic talent, and occasionally by considerable force of satire and humour. The characters are seventy-eight in all, comprising both general divisions of men, and also many of the most remarkable among the official and other social distinctions of the time. As a specimen we will transcribe that of an Alderman, which is one of the shortest:—

He is venerable in his gown, more in his beard, wherewith he sets not forth so much his own as the face of a city. You must look on him as one of the town gates, and consider him not as a body, but a corporation. His eminency above others hath made him a man of worship, for he had never been preferred but that he was worth thousands. He oversees the commonwealth as his shop, and it is an argument of his policy that he has thriven by his craft. He is a rigorous magistrate in his ward; yet his scale of justice is suspected, lest it be like the balances in his warehouse. A ponderous man he is, and substantial, for his weight is commonly extraordinary, and in his preferment nothing rises so much as his belly. His head is of no great depth, yet well furnished; and, when it is in conjunction with his brethren, may bring forth a city apophthegm, or some such sage matter. He is one that will not hastily run into error; for he treads with great deliberation, and his judgment consists much in his pace. His discourse is commonly the annals of his mayoralty, and what good government there was in the days of his gold chain, though the door-posts

were the only things that suffered reformation.[1] He seems most sincerely religious, especially on solemn days; for he comes often to church, to make a show, and is a part of the quire hangings. He is the highest stair of his profession, and an example to his trade what in time they may come to. He makes very much of his authority, but more of his satin doublet, which, though of good years, bears its age very well, and looks fresh every Sunday; but his scarlet gown is a monument, and lasts from generation to generation.

The author of the Microcosmography is more decidedly or undisguisedly anti-puritanical than Feltham. One of his severest sketches is that of a She precise Hypocrite, of whom, among other hard things, he says—

She is a non-conformist in a close stomacher and ruff of Geneva print,[2] and her purity consists much in her linen . . . . Her devotion at the church is much in the turning up of her eye, and turning down the leaf in her book when she hears named chapter and verse. When she comes home she commends the sermon for the Scripture and two hours. She loves preaching better than praying, and, of preachers, lecturers; and thinks the week-day's exercise far more edifying than the Sunday's. Her oftest gossipings are Sabbath-day's journeys, where (though an enemy to superstition) she will go in pilgrimage five mile to a silenced minister, when there is a better sermon in her own parish. She doubts of the Virgin Mary's salvation, but knows her own place in heaven as perfectly as the pew she has a key to. She is so taken up with faith she has no room for charity, and understands no good works but what are wrought on the sampler. . . . . She rails at other women by the names of Jezebel and Delilah; and calls her own daughters Rebecca and Abigail, and not Ann but Hannah. She suffers them not to learn on the virginals, because of

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[1] "It was usual for public officers to have painted or gilded posts at their doors, on which proclamations, and other documents of that description were placed, in order to be read by the populace. . . . . The *reformation* means that they were, in the language of our modern church wardens, 'repaired and beautified' during the reign of our alderman."—*Bliss.*

[2] "Strict devotees were, I believe, noted for the smallness and precision of their *ruffs*, which were termed *in print*, from the exactness of the folds. . . . . The term of *Geneva print* probably arose from the minuteness of the type used at Geneva. . . . It is, I think, clear that a *ruff of Geneva print* means a *small, closely-folded ruff*, which was the distinction of a non-conformist."—*Bliss.* The small Geneva print referred to, we apprehend, was the type used in the common copies of the Geneva translation of the Bible (Coverdale's second version, first published in 1560), which were adapted for the pocket, and were of smaller size than any other edition. This was the favourite Bible of the Puritans: and these small copies were the "little pocket Bibles, with gilt leaves," their quotations from which Selden used to hint to his brethren of the Westminster Assembly might not always be found exactly conformable to the original Greek or Hebrew.

their affinity with organs; but is reconciled to the bells for the chimes' sake, since they were reformed to the tune of a psalm. She overflows so with Bible, that she spills it upon every occasion, and will not cudgel her maids without Scripture. It is a question whether she is more troubled with the devil, or the devil with her: she is always challenging and daring him, and her weapon is *The Practice of Piety*. Nothing angers her so much as that women cannot preach, and in this point only [she] thinks the Brownists erroneous; but what she cannot at the church she does at the table, where she prattles more than any against sense and Antichrist, till a capon's wing silence her. She expounds the priests of Baal reading ministers, and thinks the salvation of that parish as desperate as the Turks'. She is a main derider, to her capacity, of those that are not her preachers, and censures all sermons but bad ones. . . . .

Many other books of characters were published in the seventeenth century. Dr. Bliss, in an Appendix to his edition of the Microcosmography has enumerated and given an account of fifty-six that appeared between 1600 and 1700, besides one, Harman's Caveat for Common Cursitors, which has been reprinted in our own day, and which was first published in 1567.

Sir Thomas Browne.

Another of the most original and peculiar writers of the middle portion of the seventeenth century is Sir Thomas Browne, the celebrated author of the Religio Medici, published in 1642; the Pseudodoxia Epidemica, or Inquiries into Vulgar and Common Errors, in 1646; and the Hydriotaphia, Urn Burial, or a Discourse on the Sepulchral Urns found in Norfolk; and The Garden of Cyrus, or the Quincuncial Lozenge, or Network Plantations of the Ancients, Artificially, Naturally, Mystically Considered, which appeared together in 1658. Browne died in 1682, at the age of seventy-seven; but he published nothing after the Restoration, though some additional tracts found among his papers were given to the world after his death. The writer of a well-known review of Browne's literary productions, and of the characteristics of his singular genius, has sketched the history of his successive acts of authorship in a lively and striking passage: —"He had no sympathy with the great business of men. In that awful year when Charles I. went in person to seize five members of the Commons' House,—when the streets resounded with shouts of 'Privilege of Parliament,' and the king's coach

was assailed by the prophetic cry, 'To your tents, O Israel,'—in that year, in fact, when the civil war first broke out, and when most men of literary power were drawn by the excitement of the crisis into patriotic controversy on either side,—appeared the calm and meditative reveries of the Religio Medici. The war raged on. It was a struggle between all the elements of government. England was torn by convulsion and red with blood. But Browne was tranquilly preparing his Pseudodoxia Epidemica; as if errors about basilisks and griffins were the paramount and fatal epidemic of the time; and it was published in due order in that year when the cause which the author advocated, as far as he could advocate anything political, lay at its last gasp. The king dies on the scaffold. The Protectorate succeeds. Men are again fighting on paper the solemn cause already decided in the field. Drawn from visions more sublime,—forsaking studies more intricate and vast than those of the poetical Sage of Norwich,—diverging from a career bounded by the most splendid goal,—foremost in the ranks shines the flaming sword of Milton: Sir Thomas Browne is lost in the quincunx of the ancient gardens; and the year 1658 beheld the death of Oliver Cromwell, and the publication of the Hydriotaphia."* The writings of Sir Thomas Browne, to be relished or rightly appreciated, must of course be read in the spirit suited to the species of literature to which they belong. If we look for matter-of-fact information in a poem, we are likely to be disappointed; and so are we likewise, if we go for the passionate or pictured style of poetry to an encyclopædia. Browne's works, with all their varied learning, contain very little positive information that can now be accounted of much value; very little even of direct moral or economical counsel by which any person could greatly profit; very little, in short, of anything that will either put money in a man's pocket, or actual knowledge in his head. Assuredly the interest with which they were perused, and the charm that was found to belong to them, could not at any time have been due, except in very small part indeed, to the estimation in which their readers held such pieces of intelligence as that the phœnix is but a fable of the poets, and that the griffin exists only in the zoology of the heralds. It would fare ill with Browne if the worth of his books were to be tried by the amount of what they contain of this kind

* Article in Edinburgh Review for October, 1836; No. 129, p. 34. (Understood to be by Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton.)

of information, or, indeed, of any other kind of what is commonly called useful knowledge; for, in truth, he has done his best to diffuse a good many vulgar errors as monstrous as any he had corrected. For that matter, if his readers were to continue to believe with him in astrology and witchcraft, we shall all agree that it was of very little consequence what faith they may hold touching the phœnix and the griffin. Mr. Hallam, we think, has, in a manner which is not usual with him, fallen somewhat into this error of applying a false test in the judgment he has passed upon Browne. It is, no doubt, quite true that the Inquiry into Vulgar Errors "scarcely raises a high notion of Browne himself as a philosopher, or of the state of physical knowledge in England;"* that the Religio Medici shows its author to have been "far removed from real philosophy, both by his turn of mind and by the nature of his erudition;" and likewise that "he seldom reasons," that "his thoughts are desultory," that "sometimes he appears sceptical or paradoxical," but that "credulity and deference to authority prevail" in his habits of thinking.† Understanding *philosophy* in the sense in which the term is here used, that is to say, as meaning the sifting and separation of fact from fiction, it may be admitted that there is not much of that in Sir Thomas Browne; his works are all rather marked by a very curious and piquant intermixture of the two. Of course, such being the case, what he writes is not to be considered solely or even principally with reference to its absolute truth or falsehood, but rather with reference to its relative truth and significance as an expression of some feeling or notion or other idiosyncracy of the very singular and interesting mind from which it has proceeded. Read in this spirit, the works of Sir Thomas Browne, more especially his Religio Medici, and his Urn Burial, will be found among the richest in our literature—full of uncommon thoughts, and trains of meditation leading far away into the dimmest inner chambers of life and death—and also of an eloquence, sometimes fantastic, but always striking, not seldom pathetic, and in its greatest passages gorgeous with the emblazonry of a warm imagination. Out of such a writer the rightly attuned and sympathizing mind will draw many things more precious than any mere facts.

* Lit. of Eur. iii. 461. † Id. iii. 153.

Sir James Harrington.

We can merely mention Sir James Harrington's political romance entitled Oceana, which was published in 1656. Harrington's leading principles are, that the natural element of power in states is property; and that, of all kinds of property, that in land is the most important, possessing, indeed, certain characteristics which distinguish it, in its natural and political action, from all other property. "In general," observes Mr. Hallam, "it may be said of Harrington that he is prolix, dull, pedantic, yet seldom profound; but sometimes redeems himself by just observations."* This is true in so far as respects the style of the Oceana; but it hardly does justice to the ingenuity, the truth, and the importance of certain of Harrington's views and deductions in the philosophy of politics. If he has not the merit of absolute originality in his main propositions, they had at least never been so clearly expounded and demonstrated by any preceding writer.

Newspapers.

It has now been satisfactorily shown that the three newspapers, entitled The English Mercurie, Nos. 50, 51, and 54, preserved among Dr. Birch's historical collections in the British Museum, professing to be "published by authority, for the contradiction of false reports," at the time of the attack of the Spanish Armada, on the credit of which the invention of newspapers used to be attributed to Lord Burleigh, are modern forgeries,—*jeux d'esprit*, in fact, of the reverend Doctor.† Occasional pamphlets, containing foreign news, began to be published in England towards the close of the reign of James I. The earliest that has been met with is entitled News out of Holland, dated 1619; and other similar papers of news from different foreign countries are extant which appeared in 1620, 1621, and 1622. The first of these news-pamphlets which came out at regular intervals appears to have been that entitled The News of the Present Week, edited by Nathaniel Butler,

* Lit. of Eur. iv. 200.

† See A Letter to Antonio Panizzi, Esq. By Thomas Watts, of the British Museum. 8vo. Lond. 1839.

which was started in 1622, in the early days of the Thirty Years' War, and was continued, in conformity with its title, as a weekly publication. But the proper era of English newspapers, at least of those containing domestic intelligence, commences with the Long Parliament. The earliest that has been discovered is a quarto pamphlet of a few leaves, entitled The Diurnal Occurrences, or Daily Proceedings of Both Houses, in this great and happy parliament, from the 3rd of November, 1640, to the 3rd of November, 1641; London, printed for William Cooke, and are to be sold at his shop at Furnival's Inn Gate, in Holborn, 1641.* More than a hundred newspapers, with different titles, appear to have been published between this date and the death of the king, and upwards of eighty others between that event and the Restoration.† "When hostilities commenced," says the writer from whom we derive this information, "every event, during a most eventful period, had its own historian, who communicated *News* from *Hull*, *Truths* from *York*, *Warranted Tidings* from *Ireland*, and *Special Passages* from *several places*. These were all occasional papers. Impatient, however, as a distracted people were for information, the news were never distributed daily. The various newspapers were published weekly at first; but in the progress of events, and the ardour of curiosity, they were distributed twice or thrice in every week.‡ Such were the French Intelligencer, the Dutch Spy, the Irish Mercury, and the Scots Dove, the Parliament Kite, and the Secret Owl. *Mercurius Acheronticus* brought them hebdomadal *News from Hell*; *Mercurius Democritus* communicated wonderful news from the World in the Moon; the *Laughing Mercury* gave perfect news from the Antipodes; and *Mercurius Mastix* faithfully lashed all Scouts, Mercuries, Posts, Spies, and other Intelligencers."§ Besides the newspapers, also, the great political and religious questions of the time were debated, as already mentioned, in a prodigious multitude of separate pamphlets, which appear to have been read quite as universally and as eagerly. Of such pamphlets printed in the twenty years from the meeting of the

* See Chronological List of Newspapers from the Epoch of the Civil Wars, in Chalmers's Life of Ruddiman, pp. 404—442.

† See Chalmers's Life of Ruddiman, p. 114.

‡ In December, 1642, however, Spalding, the Aberdeen annalist, in a passage which Mr. Chalmers has quoted, tells us that "now printed papers *daily* came from London, called *Diurnal Occurrences*, declaring what is done in parliament."—Vol. i. p. 336.

§ Chalmers, p. 116.

Long Parliament to the Restoration there are still preserved in the British Museum, forming the collection called the King's Pamphlets, no fewer than thirty thousand, which would give a rate of four or five new ones every day.

Where our modern newspapers begin, the series of our old chroniclers closes with Sir Richard Baker's Chronicle of the Kings of England, written while its author was confined for debt in the Fleet Prison, where he died in 1645, and first published in a folio volume in 1641. It was several times reprinted, and was a great favourite with our ancestors for two or three succeeding generations; but it has now lost all interest, except for a few passages relating to the author's own time. Baker, however, himself declares it to be compiled "with so great care and diligence, that, if all others were lost, this only will be sufficient to inform posterity of all passages memorable or worthy to be known." Sir Richard and his Chronicle are now popularly remembered principally as the trusted historical guides and authorities of Addison's incomparable Sir Roger de Coverley.*

Classical Learning.

Almost the only great work in the department of ancient scholarship that appeared in England in the reigns of James I. and Charles I. was the magnificent edition of Chrysostom, in eight volumes folio, by Sir Henry Savile, printed at Eton, where Savile was Provost of the College, in 1612. "The Greek language, however," observes Mr. Hallam, "was now much studied; the age of James and Charles was truly learned; our writers are prodigal of an abundant erudition, which embraces a far wider range of authors than are now read; the philosophers of every class, the poets, the historians, and orators of Greece, to whom few comparatively had paid regard in the days of Elizabeth, seem as familiar to the miscellaneous writers of her next successors as the fathers of the church are to the theologians. A few, like Jeremy Taylor, are equally copious in their libations from both streams. But, though thus deeply read in ancient learning, our old scholars are not very critical in philology."† The glory of English erudition in the days of the Commonwealth, though of

* See Spectator, No. 329.

† Lit. of Eur. ii. 376.

erudition formed in the preceding age, and by men all attached to the cause upon the ruin of which the Commonwealth was reared, is the Polyglott Bible, commonly called the London Polyglott, edited by Brian Walton, in six volumes folio, the first of which appeared in 1654, the second in 1655, the third in 1656, and the three last in 1657. In this great work, which, taken altogether, including the Lexicon Heptaglotten of Dr. Edmund Castell, added, in two volumes folio, in 1669, still remains without a rival, the Scriptures are given, entirely or partially, in nine different languages, namely, Hebrew, Chaldee, Samaritan, Syrian, Arabic, Persian, Ethiopic, Greek, and Latin. Walton was, upon the Restoration, made Bishop of Chester, but he died in 1661. To the works written by Englishmen in the Latin language before the Restoration are also to be added, besides the splendid Defensio pro Populo Anglicano and Defensio Secunda of Milton, which have been already mentioned, the De Primordiis Ecclesiarum Britannicarum (afterwards entitled Britannicarum Ecclesiarum Antiquitates), 1639, and the Annales Utriusque Testamenti, 1650 and 1654, of the learned Archbishop Usher.

Retrospect of the Commonwealth Literature.

It thus appears that the age of the Civil War and the Commonwealth does not present an absolute blank in the history of our highest literature; but, unless we are to except the Areopagitica of Milton, the Liberty of Prophesying, and a few other controversial or theological treatises of Jeremy Taylor, some publications by Fuller, and the successive apocalypses of the imperturbable dreamer of Norwich, no work of genius of the first class appeared in England in the twenty years from the meeting of the Long Parliament to the Restoration; and the literary productions having any enduring life in them at all, that are to be assigned to that space, make but a very scanty sprinkling. It was a time when men wrote and thought, as they acted, merely for the passing moment. The unprinted plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, indeed, were now sent to the press, as well as other dramatic works written in the last age; the theatres, by which they used to be published in another way, being shut up—a significant intimation, rather than anything else, that the

great age of the drama was at an end. A new play continued to drop occasionally from the commonplace pen of Shirley—almost the solitary successor of the Shakespeares, the Fletchers, the Jonsons, the Massingers, the Fords, and the rest of that bright throng. All other poetry, as well as dramatic poetry, was nearly silent—hushed partly by the din of arms and of theological and political strife, more by the frown of triumphant puritanism, boasting to itself that it had put down all the other fine arts as well as poetry, never again to lift their heads in England. It is observable that even the confusion of the contest that lasted till after the king's death did not so completely banish the muses, or drown their voice, as did the grim tranquillity under the sway of the parliament that followed. The time of the war, besides the treatises just alluded to of Milton, Taylor, Fuller, and Browne, produced the Cooper's Hill, and some other poetical pieces, by Denham, and the republication of the Comus and other early poems of Milton; the collection of the plays of Beaumont and Fletcher, and Cowley's volume entitled The Mistress, appeared in 1647, in the short interval of doubtful quiet between the first and the second war; the volume of Herrick's poetry was published the next year, while the second war was still raging, or immediately after its close; Lovelace's first volume, in 1649, probably before the execution of the king. Hobbes's Leviathan, and one or two other treatises of his, all written some time before, were printed at London in 1650 and 1651, while the author was resident in Paris. For some years from this date the blank is nearly absolute. Then, when the more liberal despotism of Cromwell had displaced the Presbyterian moroseness of the parliament, we have Fuller's Church History printed in 1655; Harrington's Oceana, and the collection of Cowley's poetry, in 1656; Browne's Hydriotaphia and Garden of Cyrus, in 1658; Lovelace's second volume, and Hales's Remains, in 1659; together with two or three philosophical publications by Hobbes, and a few short pieces in verse by Waller, of which the most famous is his Panegyric on Oliver Cromwell, written after the Protector's death, an occasion which also afforded its first considerable theme to the ripening genius of Dryden. It is to be noted, moreover, that, with one illustrious exception, none of the writers that have been named belonged to the prevailing faction. If Waller and Dryden took that side in their verses for a moment, it must be admitted that

they both amply made up for their brief conformity; Denham, Browne, Taylor, Herrick, Lovelace, Fuller, Hales, Hobbes, Cowley, were all consistent, most of them ardent, royalists; Harrington was a theoretical republican, but even he was a royalist by personal attachments; Milton alone was in life and heart a Commonwealth-man and a Cromwellian.

Poetry of Milton.

From the appearance of his minor poems, in 1645, Milton had published no poetry, with the exception of a sonnet to Henry Lawes, the musician, prefixed to a collection of Psalm tunes by that composer in 1648, till he gave to the world his Paradise Lost, in Ten Books, in 1667. In 1671 appeared his Paradise Regained and Samson Agonistes; in 1673 a new edition of his minor poems, with nine new sonnets and other additions; and in 1674, what is properly the second edition of the Paradise Lost, now distributed (by the bisection of the seventh and tenth) into twelve books. He died on Sunday the 8th of November, in that year, when within about a month of completing the sixty-sixth year of his age. His prose writings have been already noticed. Verse, however, was the form in which his genius had earliest expressed itself, and also that in which he had first come forth as an author. Passing over his paraphrases of one or two Psalms, done at a still earlier age, we have abundant promise of the future great poet in his lines On the Death of a Fair Infant, beginning,

> O fairest flower, no sooner blown but blasted,

written in his seventeenth year; and still more in the College Exercise, written in his nineteenth year. A portion of this latter is almost as prophetic as it is beautiful; and, as the verses have not been much noticed,* we will here give a few of them:—

> Hail, native Language, that by sinews weak
> Didst move my first endeavouring tongue to speak,

---

* Mr. Hallam, in his work on the Literature of Europe (iii. 269), inadvertently assumes that we have no English verse of Milton's written before his twenty-second year.

And mad'st imperfect words with childish trips,
Half-unpronounced, slide through my infant lips:

. . . . . .

I have some naked thoughts that rove about,
And loudly knock to have their passage out;
And, weary of their place, do only stay
Till thou hast deck'd them in their best array.

. . . . . .

Yet I had rather, if I were to choose,
Thy service in some graver subject use,
Such as may make thee search thy coffers round,
Before thou clothe my fancy in fit sound;
Such where the deep transported mind may soar
Above the wheeling poles, and at heaven's door
Look in, and see each blissful deity
How he before the thunderous throne doth lie,
Listening to what unshorn Apollo sings
To the touch of golden wires, while Hebe brings
Immortal nectar to her kingly sire:
Then, passing through the spheres of watchful fire,
And misty regions of wide air next under,
And hills of snow, and lofts of piled thunder,
May tell at length how green-eyed Neptune raves,
In heaven's defiance mustering all his waves;
Then sing of secret things that came to pass
When beldame Nature in her cradle was;
And last of kings, and queens, and heroes old,
Such as the wise Demodocus once told
In solemn songs at King Alcinous' feast,
While sad Ulysses' soul and all the rest
Are held with his melodious harmony
In willing chains and sweet captivity.

This was written in 1627. Fourteen years later, after his return from Italy, where some of his juvenile Latin compositions, and some others in the same language, which, as he tells us, he "had shifted in scarcity of books and conveniences to patch up amongst them, were received with written encomiums, which the Italian is not forward to bestow on men of this side the Alps;" and when assenting in so far to these commendations, and not less to an inward prompting which now grew daily upon him, he had ventured to indulge the hope that, by labour and study—"which I take," he nobly says, "to be my portion in this life"—joined with the strong propensity of nature, he "might perhaps leave something so written in after-times as they

should not willingly let it die"—he continued still inclined to fix all the industry and art he could unite to the adorning of his native tongue—or, as he goes on to say, "to be an interpreter and relater of the best and sagest things among mine own citizens, throughout this island, in the mother-dialect;—that what the greatest and choicest wits of Athens, Rome, or modern Italy, and those Hebrews of old, did for their country, I, in my proportion, with this over and above of being a Christian, might do for mine; not caring to be once named abroad, though perhaps I could attain to that, but content with these British islands as my world;" and he again, more distinctly than before, though still only in general expressions, announced the great design, "of highest hope and hardest attempting," which he proposed to himself one day to accomplish—whether in the epic form, as exemplified by Homer, Virgil, and Tasso, or after the dramatic, "wherein Sophocles and Euripides reign"—or in the style of "those magnific odes and hymns" of Pindarus and Callimachus; not forgetting that of all these kinds of writing the highest models are to be found in the Holy Scriptures—in the Book of Job, in the Song of Solomon and the Apocalypse of St. John, in the frequent songs interspersed throughout the Law and the Prophets. "The thing which I had to say," concluded this remarkable announcement, "and those intentions which have lived within me ever since I could conceive myself anything worth to my country, I return to crave excuse that urgent reason hath plucked from me by an abortive and foredated discovery. And the accomplishment of them lies not but in a power above man's to promise; but that none hath by more studious ways endeavoured, and with more unwearied spirit that none shall, that I dare almost aver of myself, as far as life and free leisure will extend; and that the land had once enfranchised herself from this impertinent yoke of prelaty, under whose inquisitorious and tyrannical duncery no free and splendid wit can flourish. Neither do I think it shame to covenant with any knowing reader, that for some few years yet I may go on trust with him toward the payment of what I am now indebted; as being a work not to be raised from the heat of youth or the vapours of wine, like that which flows at waste from the pen of some vulgar amourist, or the trencher fury of a rhyming parasite; nor to be obtained by the invocation of dame Memory and her Siren daughters; but by devout prayer to that eternal Spirit, who can

enrich with all utterance and knowledge, and sends out his seraphim, with the hallowed fire of his altar, to touch and purify the lips of whom he pleases. To this must be added industrious and select reading, steady observation, insight into all scemly and generous arts and affairs. Till which in some measure be accomplished, at mine own peril and cost I refuse not to sustain this expectation from as many as are not loth to hazard as much credulity upon the best pledges that I can give them."*

Before this, there had appeared in print of Milton's poetry only his Comus and Lycidas; the former in 1637, the latter with some other Cambridge verses on the same occasion, the loss at sea of his friend Edward King, in 1638; but, besides some of his sonnets and other minor pieces, he had also written the fragment entitled Arcades, and the two companion poems the L'Allegro and the Il Penseroso. These productions already attested the worthy successor of the greatest writers of English verse in the preceding age—recalling the fancy and the melody of the minor poems of Spenser and Shakespeare, and of the Faithful Shepherdess of Fletcher. The Comus, indeed, might be considered as an avowed imitation of the last-mentioned production. The resemblance in poetical character between the two sylvan dramas of Fletcher and Milton is very close; and they may be said to stand apart from all else in our literature—for Ben Jonson's Sad Shepherd is not for a moment to be compared with either, and in the Midsummer Night's Dream, Shakespeare, ever creative, passionate, and dramatic beyond all other writers, has soared so high above both, whether we look to the supernatural part of his fable or to its scenes of human interest, that we are little reminded of his peopled woodlands, his fairies, his lovers, or his glorious "rude mechanicals," either by the Faithful Shepherdess or the Comus. Of these two compositions, Milton's must be admitted to have the higher moral inspiration, and it is also the more elaborate and exact as a piece of writing; but in all that goes to make up dramatic effect, in the involvement and conduct of the story, and in the eloquence of natural feeling, Fletcher's is decidedly superior. It has been remarked that even in Shakespeare's early narrative poems—his Venus and Adonis, and his Tarquin and Lucrece—we may discern the future great dramatist by the full and unwithholding abandonment with which he there

* The Reason of Church Government urged against Prelaty (published in 1641).

projects himself into whatever character he brings forward, and the power of vivid conception with which he realizes the visionary scene, and brings it around him almost in the distinctness of broad daylight, as shown by a peculiar directness and life of expression evidently coming everywhere unsought, and escaping from his pen, one might almost say without his own consciousness,—without apparently any feeling, at least, of either art exercised or feat achieved.* In the case of Milton, on the contrary, his first published poem and earliest poetical attempt of any considerable extent, although in the dramatic form, affords abundant evidence that his genius was not dramatic. Comus is an exquisitely beautiful poem, but nearly destitute of everything we more especially look for in a drama—of passion, of character, of story, of action or movement of any kind. It flows on in a continued stream of eloquence, fancy, and most melodious versification; but there is no dialogue, properly so called, no replication of diverse emotions or natures; it is Milton alone who sings or declaims all the while,—sometimes of course on one side of the argument, sometimes on the other, and not, it may be, without changing his attitude and the tone of his voice, but still speaking only from one head, from one heart, from one ever-present and ever-dominant constitution of being. And from this imprisonment within himself Milton never escapes, either in his dramatic or in his other poetry; it is the characteristic which distinguishes him not only from our great dramatists, but also from other great epic and narrative poets. His poetry has been sometimes described as to an unusual degree wanting in the expression of his own personal feelings; and, notwithstanding some remarkable instances of exception, not only in his minor pieces, but in his great epic, the remark is true in a certain sense. He is no habitual brooder over his own emotions, no self-dissector, no systematic resorter for inspiration to the accidents of his own personal history. His subject in some degree forbade this; his proud and lofty nature still more withheld him from it. But, although disdaining thus to picture himself at full length either for our pity or admiration, he has yet impressed the stamp of his own individuality—of his own character, moral as well as intellectual—as deep on all he has written as if his theme had been ever so directly himself. Compare him in this respect with Homer. We scarcely conceive of the old Greek poet as having a sentient

* See this illustrated in Coleridge's Biographia Literaria, vol. ii.

existence at all, any more than we do of the sea or the breezes of heaven, whose music his continuous, undulating verse, ever various, ever the same, resembles. Who in the delineation of the wrath of Achilles finds a trace of the temper or character of the delineator? Who in Milton's Satan does not recognize much of Milton himself? But, although the spirit of his poetry is thus essentially egotistic, the range of his poetic power is not thereby confined within narrow limits. He had not the "myriad-minded" nature of Shakespeare—the all-penetrating sympathy by which the greatest of dramatists could transform himself for the time into any one of the other existences around him, no matter how high, no matter how low: conceive the haughty genius of Milton employed in the task of developing such a character as Justice Shallow, or Bottom the weaver, or a score of others to be found in the long, various, brilliant procession headed by Falstaff and ending with Dogberry! Anything of this kind he could scarcely have performed much better than the most ordinarily gifted of the sons of men; he had no more the wit or humour requisite for it than he had the power of intense and universal sympathy. But his proper region was still a vast one; and there, his vision, though always tinged with the colour of his own passions and opinions, was, notwithstanding, both as far reaching and as searching as any poet's ever was. In its style or form his poetry may be considered to belong rudimentally to the same Italian school with that of the greatest of his predecessors—of Spenser and of Shakespeare, if not also of Chaucer. But, as of these others, so it is true of him, that the inspiration of his Italian models is most perceptible in his earlier and minor verses, and that in his more mature and higher efforts he enriched this original basis of his poetic manner with so much of a different character, partly derived from other foreign sources, partly peculiar to himself, that the mode of conception and expression which he ultimately thus worked out is most correctly described by calling it his own. Conversant as he was with the language and literature of Italy, his poetry probably acquired what it has of Italian in its character principally through the medium of the elder poets of his own country; and it is, accordingly, still more English than Italian. Much of its inner spirit, and something also of its outward fashion, is of Hebrew derivation: it may be affirmed that from the fountain of no other foreign literature did Milton drink with so much eagerness as from this, and that by

no other was his genius so much nourished and strengthened. Not a little, also, one so accomplished in the lore of classic antiquity must needs have acquired from that source; the tones of the poetry of Greece and Rome are heard more or less audibly everywhere in that of the great epic poet of England. But do we go too far in holding that in what he has actually achieved in his proper domain, the modern writer rises high "above all Greek, above all Roman fame?" Where in the poetry of the ancient world shall we find anything which approaches the richness and beauty, still less the sublimity, of the most triumphant passages in Paradise Lost? The First Book of that poem is probably the most splendid and perfect of human compositions—the one, that is to say, which unites these two qualities in the highest degree; and the Fourth is as unsurpassed for grace and luxuriance as that is for magnificence of imagination. And, though these are perhaps the two greatest books in the poem, taken each as a whole, there are passages in every one of the other books equal or almost equal to the finest in these. And worthy of the thoughts that breathe are the words that burn. A tide of gorgeous eloquence rolls on from beginning to end, like a river of molten gold; outblazing, we may surely say, everything of the kind in any other poetry. Finally, Milton's blank verse, both for its rich and varied music and its exquisite adaptation, would in itself almost deserve to be styled poetry, without the words; alone of all our poets, before or since, he has brought out the full capabilities of the language in that form of composition. Indeed, out of the drama, he is still our only great blank verse writer. Compared to his, the blank verse of no other of our narrative or didactic poets, unless we are to except a few of the happiest attempts at the direct imitation of his pauses and cadences, reads like anything else than a sort of muffled rhyme—rhyme spoilt by the ends being blunted or broken off. Who remembers, who can repeat, any narrative blank verse but his? In whose ear does any other linger? What other has the true organ tone which makes the music of this form of verse—either the grandeur or the sweetness?

It is natural, in comparing, or contrasting, Milton's Paradise Lost with his Paradise Regained, to think of the two great Homeric epics; the Iliad commonly believed by antiquity to have proceeded from the inspired poet in the vigour and glow of his manhood or middle age, the Odyssey to reflect the milder

radiance of his imagination in the afternoon or evening of his life. It has been common accordingly to apply to the case of the English poet also the famous similitude of Longinus, and to say that in the Paradise Regained we have the sun on his descent, the same indeed as ever in majesty (τὸ μέγεθος), but deprived of his overpowering ardour (δίχα τῆς σφοδρότητος). Some have gone farther, not claiming for the Paradise Regained the honour of being sunshine at all, but only holding it worthy of being applauded in the spirit and after the fashion in which Pope has eulogized the gracious though not dazzling qualities of his friend Martha Blount:—

> So, when the sun's broad beam has tired the sight,
> All mild ascends the moon's more sober light;
> Serene in virgin modesty she shines,
> And unobserved the glaring orb declines.

An ingenious theory has been put forth by one of the editors of the Paradise Regained, Mr. Charles Dunster; he conceives that Milton designed this poem for an example of what he has himself in the remarkable passage of his Reason of Church Government, to which we have already had occasion to refer, spoken of as the *brief epic*, and distinguished from the *great and diffuse epic*, such as those of Homer and of Virgil, and his own Paradise Lost. Milton's words in full are:—"Time serves not now, and, perhaps, I might seem too profuse, to give any certain account of what the mind at home, in the spacious circuits of her musing, hath liberty to propose to herself, though of highest hope and hardest attempting; whether that epic form, whereof the two poems of Homer, and those other two of Virgil and Tasso, are a diffuse, and the book of Job a brief, model." Dunster accordingly thinks that we may suppose the model which Milton set before him in his Paradise Regained to have been in a great measure the book of Job.*

But surely the comparison which the companionship or sequence of the two Miltonic epics most forcibly suggests to a true feeling of both their resemblance and their difference, and of the prevailing spirit that animates each, is that of the Old and the New Testament. The one is distinctively Hebrew, the other as distinctively Christian. With much in common, they have also,

* Paradise Regained; with notes. By Charles Dunster, M.A. 4to. Lond. 1795. p. 2.

like the two religions, and the two collections of sacred books, much in which they are unlike, and in a certain sense opposed to one another, both in manner and in sentiment. The poetry of the Paradise Lost, all life and movement, is to that of the Paradise Regained what a conflagration is to a sunlit landscape. In the one we have the grandeur of the old worship, in the other the simplicity of the new. The one addresses itself more to the sense, the other to the understanding. In respect either of force or of variety, either of intense and burning passion or of imaginative power mingling and blending all the wonders of brightness and gloom, there can be no comparison between them. There is the same poetic art, it is true, in both poems; they are more unmistakeably products of the same mind, perhaps, than are the Iliad and the Odyssey; and yet the difference between them in tone and character is greater than that between the two Greek epics. It is in some respects like the difference between an oil-painting and a painting in water-colours. The mere brevity of the one as compared with the other would stamp it as a work of inferior pretension, and it is still more limited in subject or scope than it is in dimensions. The Paradise Regained must be considered, in fact, as only an appendage to the Paradise Lost. Yet, comparatively short as it is, the thread of the narrative is felt to be spun out and over-much attenuated. It contains some highly finished and exquisite passages; but perhaps the only poetical quality in which it can be held to match, if it does not sometimes even surpass, the Paradise Lost, is picturesqueness. In that it more resembles the L'Allegro and the Il Penseroso than it does its companion epic. Even the argumentative eloquence, of which it is chiefly made up, brilliant as it is, is far from being equal to the best of that in the Paradise Lost. It has the same ingenuity and logic, with as much, or perhaps even more, concentration in the expression; but, unavoidably, it may be, from the circumstances of the case, it has not either the same glow and splendour or even the same tone of real feeling. The fallen spirits thronging Pandemonium, or stretched on the burning lake before that gorgeous pile "rose like an exhalation," consult and debate, in their misery and anxious perplexity, with an accent of human earnestness which it was impossible to give either to the conscious sophistry of their chief in that other scene or to the wisdom more than human by which he is refuted and repelled.

It is commonly said that Milton himself professed to prefer the

Paradise Regained to the Paradise Lost. The probability is that, if he asserted the former to be the better poem of the two, it was only in a qualified sense, or with reference to something else than its poetical merits, and in the same feeling with which he explained the general prevalence of the opposite opinion by attributing it to most people having a much stronger feeling of regret for the loss of Paradise than desire for the recovery of it, or at least inclination for the only way in which it was to be recovered. It was very characteristic of him, however, to be best pleased with what he had last produced, as well as to be only confirmed in his partiality by having the general voice against him and by his contempt for what of extravagance and injustice there was in the popular depreciation of the new poem. He was in all things by temper and mental constitution essentially a partisan; seeing clearly, indeed, all that was to be said on both sides of any question, but never for all that remaining in suspense between them, or hesitating to make up his mind and to take his place distinctly on one side. This is shown by the whole course of his life. Nor is it less expressively proclaimed not only by the whole tone and manner of his poetry, everywhere so ardent, impetuous, and dogmatical, and so free from the faintest breath either of suspicion or of any kind of self-distrust, but even in that argumentative eloquence which is one of its most remarkable characteristics. For one of the chief necessary conditions of the existence of oratorical or debating power, and, indeed, of every kind of fighting ability, is that it should, at one and the same time, both feel passionately in favour of its own side of the question and discern clearly the strength of the adverse position. Whatever may be the fact as to his alleged preference of the Paradise Regained to the Paradise Lost, Milton has, at any rate, pronounced judgment in a sufficiently decisive and uncompromising way upon another point in regard to which both these works stand contrasted with much of his earlier poetry. We refer to his vehement denunciation, in a notice prefixed to the Paradise Lost,* of rhyme as being, in all circumstances, for he makes no exception, "a thing of itself, to all judicious ears, trivial and of no true musical delight," and as having no claim to be regarded as anything else

* This notice, commonly headed *The Verse* in modern editions of the poem, is found in three of the five various forms of the first edition (1667, 1668, and 1669), and there bears the superscription *The Printer to the Reader;* but there can be no doubt that it is Milton's own.

than the barbarous invention of a barbarous age, and a mere jingle and life-repressing bondage. We certainly rejoice that the Paradise Lost is not written in rhyme; but we are very glad that these strong views were not taken up by the great poet till after he had produced his L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, his Lycidas and his Sonnets.

Cowley.

The poetry of Milton, though principally produced after the Restoration, belongs in everything but in date to the preceding age; and this is also nearly as true of that of Cowley. Abraham Cowley, born in London in 1618, published his first volume of verse, under the title of Poetic Blossoms, in 1633, when he was yet only a boy of fifteen: one piece contained in this publication, indeed—The Tragical History of Pyramus and Thisbe—was written when he was only in his tenth year. The four books of his unfinished epic entitled Davideis were mostly written while he was a student at Trinity College, Cambridge. His pastoral drama of Love's Riddle, and his Latin comedy called Naufragium Joculare, were both published in 1638. In 1647 appeared his collection of amatory poems entitled The Mistress, and in 1653 his comedy of The Guardian, afterwards altered, and republished as The Cutter of Coleman Street. After the Restoration he collected such of his pieces as he thought worth preserving, and republished them, together with some additional productions, of which the most important were his Davideis, and his Pindarique Odes.

Few poets have been more popular, or more praised, in their own time than Cowley. Milton is said to have declared that the three greatest English poets were Spenser, Shakespeare, and Cowley; though it does not follow that he held all three to be equally great. Sir John Denham, in some verses on Cowley's Death and Burial amongst the Ancient Poets in Westminster Abbey, sets him above all the English poets that had gone before him, and prophesies that posterity will hold him to have been equalled by Virgil alone among those of antiquity. For a long time, too, his works appear to have been more generally read than those of any other English poet, if a judgment may be formed from the frequency with which they were reprinted, and the

numerous copies of them in various forms that still exist.* This popular favour they seem to have shared with those of Donne, whose legitimate successor Cowley was considered to be; or rather, when the poetry of Donne became obsolete or unfashionable, that of Cowley took its place in the reading and admiration of the poetical part of the public. Cowley, indeed, is in the main a mere modernization and dilution of Donne. With the same general characteristics of manner, he is somewhat less forced and fantastical, a good deal less daring in every way, but unfortunately also infinitely less poetical. Everything about him, in short, is less deep, strong, and genuine. His imagination is tinsel, or mere surface gilding, compared to Donne's solid gold; his wit little better than word-catching, to the profound meditative quaintness of the elder poet; and of passion, with which all Donne's finest lines are tremulous, Cowley has none. Considerable grace and dignity occasionally distinguish his Pindaric Odes (which, however, are Pindaric only in name); and he has shown much elegant playfulness of style and fancy in his translations from and imitations of Anacreon, and in some other verses written in the same manner. As for what he intends for love verses, some of them are pretty enough frost-work; but the only sort of love there is in them is the love of point and sparkle.

Butler.

This manner of writing is more fitly applied by another celebrated poet of the same date, Samuel Butler, the immortal author of Hudibras. Butler, born in 1612, is said to have written most of his great poem during the interregnum; but the first part of it was not published till 1663. The poetry of Butler has been very happily designated as merely the comedy of that style of composition which Donne and Cowley practised in its more serious form—the difference between the two modes of writing being much the same with that which is presented by a countenance of a peculiar cast of features when solemnized by deep reflection, and the same countenance when lighted up by cheerfulness or distorted by mirth.† And it may be added, that the

* A twelfth edition of the collection formed by Cowley himself was published by Tonson in 1721.

† Scott, in Life of Dryden.

gayer and more animated expression is here, upon the whole, the more natural. The quantity of explosive matter of all kinds which Butler has contrived to pack up in his verses is amazing; it is crack upon crack, flash upon flash, from the first line of his long poem to the last. Much of this incessant bedazzlement is, of course, merely verbal, or otherwise of the humblest species of wit; but an infinite number of the happiest things are also thrown out. And Hudibras is far from being all mere broad farce. Butler's power of arguing in verse, in his own way, may almost be put on a par with Dryden's in his; and, perseveringly as he devotes himself upon system to the exhibition of the ludicrous and grotesque, he sometimes surprises us with a sudden gleam of the truest beauty of thought and expression breaking out from the midst of the usual rattling fire of smartnesses and conundrums—as when in one place he exclaims of a thin cloud drawn over the moon—

> Mysterious veil; of brightness made,
> At once her lustre and her shade!

He must also be allowed to tell his story and to draw his characters well, independently of his criticisms.

WALLER.

The most celebrated among the minor poets of the period between the Restoration and the Revolution was Waller. Edmund Waller, born in 1605, had, as already noticed, announced himself as a writer of verse before the close of the reign of James I., by his lines on the escape of Prince Charles at the port of San Andero, in the Bay of Biscay, on his return from Spain, in September, 1623; and he continued to write till after the accession of James II., in whose reign he died, in the year 1687. His last production was the little poem concluding with one of his happiest, one of his most characteristic, and one of his best-known passages:—

> The soul's dark cottage, battered and decayed,
> Lets in new light through chinks that time has made:
> Stronger by weakness, wiser men become
> As they draw near to their eternal home:
> Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view,
> That stand upon the threshold of the new.

Fenton, his editor, tells us that a number of poems on religious subjects, to which these verses refer, were mostly written when he was about [above] eighty years old; and he has himself intimated that his bodily faculties were now almost gone:—

> When we for age could neither read nor write,
> The subject made us able to indite.

Waller, therefore, as well as Milton, Cowley, and Butler, may be considered to have formed his manner in the last age; but his poetry does not belong to the old English school even so much as that of either Butler or Cowley. The contemporaries of the earlier portion of his long career were Carew and Lovelace; and with them he is properly to be classed in respect of poetical style and manner. Both Lovelace and Carew, however, as has been already intimated, have more passion than Waller, who, with all his taste and elegance, was incapable of either expressing or feeling anything very lofty or generous—being, in truth, poet as he was, a very mean-souled description of person, as his despicable political course sufficiently evinced.* His poetry accordingly is beyond the reach of critical animadversion on the score of such extravagance as is sometimes prompted by strong emotion. Waller is always perfectly master of himself, and idolizes his mistress with quite as much coolness and self-possession as he flatters his prince. But, although cold and unaffecting at all times, he occasionally rises to much dignity of thought and manner. His panegyric on Cromwell, the offering of his gratitude to the Protector for the permission granted to him of returning to England after ten years' exile, is one of the most graceful pieces of adulation ever offered by poetry to power; and the poet is here probably more sincere than in most of his

* The story of what was called Waller's plot, which exploded in May, 1643, is well known. Some of those concerned were executed, and others were punished by long imprisonments; but Waller, who appears to have been the most guilty, is understood to have made his peace by the reckless frankness of his confessions, and was let off with a fine and a licence "to go travel abroad." He left the country accordingly, "and, travelling into France," says Kennet, "improved himself in good letters; *and for the rest of his life, which was very long, he chose rather to be admired for a poet than to be envied for a politician.*" They print among his works some of his speeches in parliament—among the rest his address on Tuesday, July 4th, 1643, when he "was brought to the bar, and had leave given him by the Speaker to say what he could for himself before they proceeded to expel him the House," which is throughout one of the most abject prostrations ever made by anything in the shape of a man.

effusions, for the occasion was one on which he was likely to be moved to more than usual earnestness of feeling. A few years after he welcomed Charles II. on his restoration to the throne of his ancestors in another poem, which has been generally considered a much less spirited composition: Fenton accounts for the falling off by the author's advance in the meanwhile from his forty-ninth to his fifty-fifth year—"from which time," he observes, "his genius began to decline apace from its meridian;" but the poet himself assigned another reason:—when Charles frankly told him that he thought his own panegyric much inferior to Cromwell's, "Sir," replied Waller, "we poets never succeed so well in writing truth as in fiction." Perhaps the true reason, after all, might be that his majesty's return to England was not quite so exciting a subject to Mr. Waller's muse as his own return had been. One thing must be admitted in regard to Waller's poetry; it is free from all mere verbiage and empty sound; if he rarely or never strikes a very powerful note, there is at least always something for the fancy or the understanding, as well as for the ear, in what he writes. He abounds also in ingenious thoughts, which he dresses to the best advantage, and exhibits with great transparency of style. Eminent, however, as he is in his class, he must be reckoned among that subordinate class of poets who think and express themselves chiefly in similitudes, not among those who conceive and write passionately and metaphorically. He had a decorative and illuminating, but not a transforming imagination.

MARVEL.

The chief writer of verse on the popular side after the Restoration was Andrew Marvel, the noble-minded member for Hull, the friend of Milton, and, in that age of brilliant profligacy, renowned alike as the first of patriots and of wits. Marvel, the son of the Rev. Andrew Marvel, master of the grammar-school of Hull, was born there in 1620, and died in 1678. His poetical genius has scarcely had justice done to it. He is the author of a number of satires in verse, in which a rich vein of vigorous, though often coarse, humour runs through a careless, extemporaneous style, and which did prodigious execution in the party warfare of the day; but some of his other

poetry, mostly perhaps written in the earlier part of his life, is eminent both for the delicate bloom of the sentiment and for grace of form. His Song of the Exiles, beginning "Where the remote Bermudas ride," is a gem of melody, picturesqueness, and sentiment, nearly without a flaw, and is familiar to every lover of poetry. Not of such purity of execution throughout are the lines entitled To his Coy Mistress, but still there are few short poems in the language so remarkable for the union of grace and force, and the easy and flowing transition from a light and playful tone to solemnity, passion, and grandeur. How elegant, and even deferential, is the gay extravagance of the commencement:—

Had we but world enough and time,
This coyness, lady, were no crime.
We would sit down, and think which way
To walk, and pass our long love's day.
Thou by the Indian Ganges' side
Should'st rubies find: I by the tide
Of Humber would complain. I would
Love you ten years before the flood;
And you should, if you please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.
My vegetable love should grow
Vaster than empires, and more slow.
An hundred years should go to praise
Thine eyes, and on thy forehead gaze;
Two hundred to adore each breast;
But thirty thousand to the rest:
An age at least to every part;
And the last age should show your heart.
For, lady, you deserve this state;
Nor would I love at lower rate.

And then how skilfully managed is the rise from this badinage of courtesy and compliment to the strain almost of the ode or the hymn! and how harmonious, notwithstanding its suddenness, is the contrast between the sparkling levity of the prelude and the solemn pathos that follows!—

But at my back I always hear
Time's winged chariot hurrying near;
And yonder all before us lie
Deserts of vast eternity.
Thy beauty shall no more be found;
Nor in thy marble vault shall sound
My echoing song. . . . .

Till, at the end, the pent-up accumulation of passion bursts its floodgates in the noble lines:—

> Let us roll all our strength, and all
> Our sweetness, up into one ball;
> And tear our pleasures with rough strife
> Thorough the iron gates of life.

The following verses, which are less known, are exquisitely elegant and tuneful. They are entitled The Picture of T. C. in a Prospect of Flowers:—

> See with what simplicity
> This nymph begins her golden days!
> In the green grass she loves to lie,
> And there with her fair aspect tames
> The wilder flowers, and gives them names;
> But only with the roses plays,
> And them does tell
> What colour best becomes them, and what smell.
>
> Who can foretell for what high cause
> This darling of the gods was born?
> See this is she whose chaster laws
> The wanton Love shall one day fear,
> And, under her command severe,
> See his bow broke and ensigns torn.
> Happy who can
> Appease this virtuous enemy of man!
>
> O then let me in time compound,
> And parley with those conquering eyes;
> Ere they have tried their force to wound,
> Ere with their glancing wheels they drive
> In triumph over hearts that strive,
> And them that yield but more despise.
> Let me be laid
> Where I may see the glory from some shade.
>
> Meantime, whilst every verdant thing
> Itself does at thy beauty charm,[1]
> Reform the errors of the spring;
> Make that the tulips may have share
> Of sweetness, seeing they are fair;
> And roses of their thorns disarm:
> But most procure
> That violets may a longer age endure.
>
> But oh, young beauty of the woods,
> Whom nature courts with fruits and flowers,

[1] *Charm itself*, that is, delight itself.

Gather the flowers, but spare the buds;[1]
Lest Flora, angry at thy crime
To kill her infants in their prime,
Should quickly make the example yours;
And, ere we see,
Nip in the blossom all our hopes in thee.

Certainly neither Carew, nor Waller, nor any other court poet of that day, has produced anything in the same style finer than these lines. But Marvel's more elaborate poetry is not confined to love songs and other such light exercises of an ingenious and elegant fancy. Witness his verses on Milton's Paradise Lost—"When I beheld the poet blind, yet bold"—which have throughout almost the dignity, and in parts more than the strength, of Waller. But, instead of transcribing these, which are printed in most editions of Milton, we will give as a specimen of his more serious vein a portion of his longer poem on the Death of the Lord Protector:—

That Providence, which had so long the care
Of Cromwell's head, and numbered every hair,
Now in itself, the glass where all appears,
Had seen the period of his golden years;
And thenceforth only did intend to trace
What death might least so fair a life deface.
. . . . . .
To love and grief the fatal writ was signed
(Those nobler weaknesses of human kind,
From which those powers that issued the decree,
Although immortal, found they were not free);
That they, to whom his breast still open lies,
In gentle passions should his death disguise,
And leave succeeding ages cause to mourn
As long as grief shall weep, or love shall burn.[2]

Straight does a slow and languishing disease
Eliza,[3] nature's and his darling, seize.
. . . . . .

[1] This may remind the reader of Wordsworth of that poet's

"Here are Daisies, take your fill;
Pansies, and the Cuckow-flower:
Of the lofty Daffodil
Make your bed, and make your bower;
Fill your lap, and fill your bosom;
Only spare the Strawberry-blossom."

[2] Misprinted "or love shall mourn."

[3] That is, Cromwell's second and favourite daughter, Elizabeth, the wife of John Claypole, Esq., who died about a month before her father.

Like polished mirrors, so his steely breast
Had every figure of her woes expressed;
And, with the damp of her last gasps obscured,
Had drawn such stains as were not to be cured.
Fate could not either reach with single stroke,
But, the dear image fled, the mirror broke.

. . . . . .

He without noise still travelled to his end,
As silent suns to meet the night descend:
The stars, that for him fought, had only power
Left to determine now his fatal hour;
Which since they might not hinder, yet they cast
To choose it worthy of his glories past.
No part of time but bare his mark away
Of honour; all the year was Cromwell's day;
But this, of all the most auspicious found,
Twice had in open field him victor crowned;
When up the armed mountains of Dunbar
He marched, and through deep Severn, ending war.
What day should him eternize, but the same
That had before immortalized his name?
That so, whoe'er would at his death have joyed
In their own griefs might find themselves employed.
But those that sadly his departure grieved
Yet joyed, remembering what he once achieved;
And the last minute his victorious ghost
Gave chase to Ligny on the Belgic coast.
Here ended all his mortal toils; he laid,[1]
And slept in peace under the laurel shade.

O Cromwell! heaven's favourite, to none
Have such high honours from above been shown;
For whom the elements we mourners see,
And heaven itself would the great herald be;
Which with more care set forth his obsequies
Than those of Moses, hid from human eyes;
As jealous only here, lest all be less
Than we could to his memory express.

. . . . . .

Since him away the dismal tempest rent,
Who once more joined us to the continent;
Who planted England on the Flandric shore,
And stretched our frontier to the Indian ore;
Whose greater truths obscure the fables old,
Whether of British saints or worthies told;

---

[1] This form was not the vulgarism in the seventeenth century that it is now. It is frequent in Marvel and several of his contemporaries.

And, in a valour lessening Arthur's deeds,
For holiness the Confessor exceeds.

He first put arms into religion's hand,
And, timorous conscience unto courage manned,
The soldier taught that inward mail to wear,
And, fearing God, how they should nothing fear:[1]
Those strokes, he said, will strike through all below,
Where those that strike from heaven fetch their blow.
Astonished armies did their flight prepare,
And cities strong were stormed by his prayer:
Of that for ever Preston's field shall tell
The story, and impregnable Clonmell.

. . . . . .

Valour, religion, friendship, prudence, died
At once with him, and all that's good beside;
And we, death's refuse, nature's dregs, confined
To loathsome life, alas! are left behind:
Where we (so once we used) shall now no more,
To fetch day, press about his chamber door;
From which he issued with that awful state,
It seemed Mars broke through Janus' double gate;
Yet always tempered with an air so mild,
No April suns that e'er so gently smiled:
No more shall hear that powerful language charm,
Whose force oft spared the labour of his arm:
No more shall follow where he spent the days
In war, in counsel, or in prayer and praise;
Whose meanest acts he would himself advance,
As ungirt David to the ark did dance.
All, all is gone of ours or his delight
In horses fierce, wild deer, or armour bright:
Francisca fair[2] can nothing now but weep,
Nor with soft notes shall sing his cares asleep.

I saw him dead: a leaden slumber lies,
And mortal sleep, over those wakeful eyes:

---

[1] Is this, then, the true origin of Cowper's verse—

"Who fears his God, and knows no other fear"?

Racine's Athalie, in which occurs the famous line—

"Je crains Dieu, cher Abner, et n'ai point d'autre crainte"—

was not written till many years after Marvel's poem.

[2] The Lady Frances Cromwell, the Protector's fourth and youngest daughter, at this time the wife of Sir John Russell, Bart., having been previously married to Robert Rich, Esq., grandson and heir of Robert Earl of Warwick. She is said to have been at one time sought in marriage by Charles Stuart. Lady Russell survived all her brothers and sisters, dying, at the age of eighty-four. in 1721.

Those gentle rays under the lids were fled,
Which through his looks that piercing sweetness shed;
That port, which so majestic was and strong,
Loose and deprived of vigour stretched along;
All withered, all discoloured, pale and wan;
How much another thing! no more that man!
Oh human glory! vain! oh death! oh wings!
Oh worthless world! oh transitory things!
Yet dwelt that greatness in his shape decayed
That still, though dead, greater than death he laid,
And in his altered face you something feign
That threatens death he yet will live again.
Not much unlike the sacred oak which shoots
To heaven its branches, and through earth its roots;
Whose spacious boughs are hung with trophies round,
And honoured wreaths have oft the victor crowned;
When angry Jove darts lightning through the air
At mortals' sins, nor his own plant will spare,
It groans, and bruises all below, that stood
So many years the shelter of the wood;
The tree, ere while fore-shortened to our view,
When fallen shows taller yet than as it grew:
So shall his praise to after times increase,
When truth shall be allowed and faction cease.

. . . . . .

Thee many ages hence in martial verse
Shall the English soldier, ere he charge, rehearse;
Singing of thee, inflame themselves to fight,
And with the name of Cromwell armies fright.
As long as rivers to the seas shall run,
As long as Cynthia shall relieve the sun;
While stags shall fly unto the forests thick,
While sheep delight the grassy downs to pick;
As long as future time succeeds the past,
Always thy honour, praise, and name shall last.

This poem was written very soon after Cromwell's death, in the brief reign of Richard, and most probably at its commencement; for all good and high things are anticipated of that worthy successor of his great father. "He, as his father," we are told—

——— long was kept from sight
In private, to be viewed by better light;
But, opened once, what splendour does he throw!
A Cromwell in an hour a prince will grow.
How he becomes that seal! how strongly strains,
How gently winds at once, the ruling reins!

We must add a sample or two of Marvel's more reckless verse —that rough and ready satire in which he was unmatched in the latter part of his life. It is impossible to present any of his effusions in this line without curtailment; and the portions of the humour that must be abstracted are frequently the most pungent of the whole; but the following lines, entitled Royal Resolutions, may, even with the necessary omissions, convey some notion of the wit and drollery with which Marvel used to turn the court and government into ridicule :—

When plate was at pawn, and fob at an ebb,
And spider might weave in bowels its web,
And stomach as empty as brain;
Then Charles without acre
Did swear by his Maker,
If e'er I see England again,

I'll have a religion all of my own,
Whether Popish or Protestant shall not be known,
And, if it prove troublesome, I will have none.

I'll have a long parliament always to friend,
And furnish my treasure as fast as I spend;
And, if they will not, they shall have an end.

I'll have a council that sit always still,
And give me a licence to do what I will;
And two secretaries . . . . . .

My insolent brother shall bear all the sway:
If parliaments murmur, I'll send him away,
And call him again as soon as I may.

I'll have a rare son, in marrying though marred,
Shall govern, if not my kingdom, my guard,
And shall be successor to me or Gerrard.

I'll have a new London instead of the old,
With wide streets and uniform to my own mould;
But, if they build too fast, I'll bid 'em hold.

The ancient nobility I will lay by,
And new ones create, their rooms to supply;
And they shall raise fortunes for my own fry.

Some one I'll advance from a common descent
So high that he shall hector the parliament,
And all wholesome laws for the public prevent.

And I will assert him to such a degree,
That all his foul treasons, though daring and high,
Under my hand and seal shall have indemnity.

. . . . . .

I'll wholly abandon all public affairs,
And pass all my time with buffoons and players,
And saunter to Nelly when I should be at prayers.
I'll have a fine pond with a pretty decoy,
Where many strange fowl shall feed and enjoy,
And still, in their language, quack Vive le Roy.

To this we will add part of a Ballad on the Lord Mayor and Court of Aldermen presenting the King and the Duke of York each with a copy of his freedom, A.D. 1674:—

The Londoners Gent
To the King do present
In a box the city maggot:
'Tis a thing full of weight
That requires all the might
Of whole Guildhall team to drag it.

Whilst their churches are unbuilt,
And their houses undwelt,
And their orphans want bread to feed 'em,
Themselves they've bereft
Of the little wealth they'd left,
To make an offering of their freedom.

O, ye addlebrained cits!
Who henceforth, in their wits,
Would trust their youth to your heeding?
When in diamonds and gold
Ye have *him* thus enrolled?
Ye knew both his friends and his breeding!

Beyond sea he began,
Where such a riot he ran
That every one there did leave him;
And now he's come o'er
Ten times worse than before,
When none but such fools would receive him.

He ne'er knew, not he,
How to serve or be free,
Though he has passed through so many adventures;
But e'er since he was bound
(That is, since he was crowned)
He has every day broke his indentures.

. . . . . .

Throughout Lombard Street,
Each man he did meet
He would run on the score with and borrow:
When they asked for their own
He was broke and was gone,
And his creditors all left to sorrow.

Though oft bound to the peace,
Yet he never would cease
To vex his poor neighbours with quarrels;
And, when he was beat,
He still made his retreat
To his Clevelands, his Nells, and his Carwells.

. . . . . .

His word or his oath
Cannot bind him to troth,
And he values not credit or history;
And, though he has served through
Two prenticeships now,
He knows not his trade nor his mystery.

Then, London, rejoice
In thy fortunate choice,
To have him made free of thy spices;
And do not mistrust
He may once grow more just
When he's worn off his follies and vices.

And what little thing
Is that which you bring
To the Duke, the kingdom's darling?
Ye hug it, and draw
Like ants at a straw,
Though too small for the gristle of starling.

Is it a box of pills
To cure the Duke's ills?
He is too far gone to begin it!
Or does your fine show
In processioning go,
With the pix, and the host within it?

The very first head
Of the oath you have read
Shows you all how fit he's to govern,
When in heart you all knew
He ne'er was nor will be true
To his country or to his sovereign.

And now, worshipful sirs,
Go fold up your furs,
And Viners turn again, turn again:
I see, whoe'er's freed,
You for slaves are decreed,
Until you burn again, burn again.

A hot pulse of scorn and indignant feeling often beats under Marvel's raillery, as may be perceived from these verses; and the generality of his pasquinades are much more caustic and scourging, as well as in every way more daring and unscrupulous.

Other Minor Poets.

Of the other minor poets of this date we can only mention the names of a few of the most distinguished. Sir Charles Sedley is the Suckling of the time of Charles II., with less impulsiveness and more insinuation, but a kindred gaiety and sprightliness of fancy, and an answering liveliness and at the same time courtly ease and elegance of diction. King Charles, a good judge of such matters, was accustomed to say that Sedley's style, either in writing or discourse, would be the standard of the English tongue; and his contemporary, the Duke of Buckingham (Villiers) used to call his exquisite art of expression *Sedley's witchcraft*. Sedley's genius early ripened and bore fruit: he was born only two or three years before the breaking out of the Civil War; and he was in high reputation as a poet and a wit within six or seven years after the Restoration. He survived both the Revolution and the century, dying in the year 1701. Sedley's fellow debauchee, the celebrated Earl of Rochester (Wilmot)—although the brutal grossness of the greater part of his verse has deservedly made it and its author infamous—was perhaps a still greater genius. There is immense strength and pregnancy of expression in some of the best of his compositions, careless and unfinished as they are. Rochester had not completed his thirty-third year when he died, in July 1680. Of the poetical productions of the other court wits of Charles's reign the principal are, the Duke of Buckingham's satirical comedy of the Rehearsal, which was very effective when first produced, and still enjoys a great reputation,

though it would probably be thought but a heavy joke now by most readers not carried away by the prejudice in its favour; the Earl of Roscommon's very commonplace Essay on Translated Verse; and the Earl of Dorset's lively and well-known song, "To all you ladies now on land," written at sea the night before the engagement with the Dutch on the 3rd of June, 1665, or rather professing to have been then written, for the asserted poetic tranquillity of the noble author in expectation of the morrow's fight has been disputed. The Marquis of Halifax and Lord Godolphin were also writers of verse at this date; but neither of them has left anything worth remembering. Among the minor poets of the time, however, we ought not to forget Charles Cotton, best known for his humorous, though somewhat coarse, travesties of Virgil and Lucian, and for his continuation of Izaak Walton's Treatise on Angling, and his fine idiomatic translation of Montaigne's Essays, but also the author of some short original pieces in verse, of much fancy and liveliness. One entitled an Ode to Winter, in particular, has been highly praised by Wordsworth.* We need scarcely mention Sir William Davenant's long and languid heroic poem of Gondibert, though Hobbes, equally eminent in poetry and the mathematics, has declared that he "never yet saw poem that had so much shape of art, health of morality, and vigour and beauty of expression;" and has prophesied that, were it not for the mutability of modern tongues, "it would last as long as either the Æneid or Iliad."† The English of the reign of Charles II. is not yet obsolete, nor likely to become so; Homer and Virgil are also still read and admired; but men have forgotten Gondibert, almost as much as they have Hobbes's own Iliad and Odyssey.

Dryden.

By far the most illustrious name among the English poets of the latter half of the seventeenth century — if we exclude Milton as belonging properly to the preceding age—is that of John Dryden. Born in 1632, Dryden produced his first known composition in verse in 1649, his lines on the death of Lord

* See Preface to Lyrical Ballads, 1815.

† Answer to Davenant's Preface to Gondibert.

Hastings, a young nobleman of great promise, who was suddenly cut off by small-pox, on the eve of his intended marriage, in that year. This earliest of Dryden's poems is in the most ambitious style of the school of Donne and Cowley: Donne himself, indeed, has scarcely penned anything quite so extravagant as one passage, in which the fancy of the young poet runs riot among the phenomena of the loathsome disease to which Lord Hastings had fallen a victim:—

> So many spots, like naeves on Venus' soil,
> One jewel set off with so many a foil:
> Blisters with pride swell'd, which through 's flesh did sprout
> Like rose-buds stuck i' the lily skin about.
> Each little pimple had a tear in it,
> To wail the fault its rising did commit:—

and so forth. Almost the only feature of the future Dryden which this production discloses is his deficiency in sensibility or heart; exciting as the occasion was, it does not contain an affecting line. Perhaps, on comparing his imitation with Donne's own poetry, so instinct with tenderness and passion, Dryden may have seen or felt that his own wanted the very quality which was the light and life of that of his master; at any rate, wiser than Cowley, who had the same reason for shunning a competition with Donne, he abandoned this style with his first attempt, and, indeed, for anything that appears, gave up the writing of poetry for some years altogether. His next verses of any consequence are dated nine years later,—his Heroic Stanzas on the death of Oliver Cromwell,—and, destitute as they are of the vigorous conception and full and easy flow of versification which he afterwards attained, they are free from any trace of the elaborate and grotesque absurdity of the Elegy on Lord Hastings. His Astræa Redux, or poem on the return of the king, produced two years after, evinces a growing freedom and command of style. But it is in his Annus Mirabilis, written in 1666, that his genius breaks forth for the first time with any promise of that full effulgence at which it ultimately arrived; here, in spite of the incumbrance of a stanza (the quatrain of alternately rhyming heroics) which he afterwards wisely exchanged for a more manageable kind of verse, we have much both of the nervous diction and the fervid fancy which characterize his latest and best works. From this date to the end of his days Dryden's life was one long literary labour;

eight original poems of considerable length, many shorter pieces, twenty-eight dramas, and several volumes of poetical translation from Chaucer, Boccaccio, Ovid, Theocritus, Lucretius, Horace, Juvenal, Persius, and Virgil, together with numerous discourses in prose, some of them very long and elaborate, attest the industry as well as the fertility of a mind which so much toil and so many draughts upon its resources were so far from exhausting, that its powers continued not only to exert themselves with unimpaired elasticity, but to grow stronger and brighter to the last. The genius of Dryden certainly did not, as that of Waller is said to have done, begin "to decline apace from its meridian" after he had reached his fifty-fifth year. His famous Alexander's Feast and his Fables, which are among his happiest performances, were the last he produced, and were published together in the year 1700, only a few months before his death, at the age of sixty-eight.*

* The modern editors have blundered strangely in regard to one of Dryden's gayest and most graceful compositions, his Dedication, which stands at the head of the Fables, of the poem of Palamon and Arcite, or The Knight's Tale, modernized from Chaucer, to the Duchess of Ormond. He there observes of his great predecessor, that, no doubt, in drawing his heroine,

> "The fairest nymph before his eyes he set,
> And then the fairest was Plantagenet;
> Who three contending princes made her prize,
> And ruled the rival nations with her eyes;
> Who left immortal trophies of her fame,
> And to the noblest order gave the name."

And then he proceeds to compliment his own patroness:—

> "Thus, after length of ages, she returns,
> Restored in you, and the same place adorns;
> Or you perform her office in the sphere,
> Born of her blood, and make a new platonic year."

Upon which Sir Walter Scott, in the standard edition of the poet's works, 18 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1808, thus comments (vol. xi. p. 246):—"The first patroness of Chaucer was Blanche, first wife of John, Duke of Gaunt [sic], whose death he has celebrated in The Boke of the Duchesse. She was the second daughter of Henry, Duke of Lancaster, grandson of Edmund, surnamed Crouchback, brother of Edward I. But I do not know how the Duchess of Ormond could be said to be born of her blood, since she was descended of John of Gaunt by his third, not his first, wife. Dryden, however, might not know, or might disregard, these minutiæ of genealogy." Even by this showing the two ladies would be of the same blood; Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster, and Mary, second wife of James, second Duke of Ormond, who was a Somerset, daughter of the Duke of Beaufort, were both Plantagenets. But the explanation leaves the principal part of the passage entirely unexplained. Chaucer's

Dryden has commonly been considered to have founded a new school of English poetry; but perhaps it would be more strictly correct to regard him as having only carried to higher perfection —perhaps to the highest to which it has yet been brought— a style of poetry which had been cultivated long before his day. The satires of Hall and of Marston, and also the Nosce Teipsum of Sir John Davies, all published before the end of the sixteenth century, not to refer to other less eminent examples, may be classed as of the same school with his poetry. It is a school very distinguishable from that to which Milton and the greatest of our elder poets belong, deriving its spirit and character, as it does, chiefly from the ancient Roman classic poetry, whereas the other is mainly the offspring of the middle ages, of Gothic manners and feelings and the Romance or Provençal literature. The one therefore may be called, with sufficient propriety, the classic, the other the romantic school of poetry. But it seems to be a mistake to assume that the former first arose in England after the Restoration, under the influence of the imitation of the French, which then became fashionable; the most that can be said is, that the French taste which then became prevalent among us may have encouraged its revival; for undoubtedly what has been called the classic school of poetry had been cultivated by English writers at a much earlier date; nor is there any reason to suppose that the example of the modern poetry of France had had any share in originally turning our own into that channel. Marston and Hall, and Sackville in his Ferrex and Porrex, and Ben Jonson in his comedies and tragedies, and the other early writers of English poetry in the classic vein, appear not to have imitated any French poets, but to have gone to the fountain-head, and sought in the productions of the Roman poets themselves,—in the plays of Terence and Seneca, and the satires of Juvenal and Persius, —for examples and models. Nay, even Dryden, at a later

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Plantagenet here is clearly not the Duchess Blanche, but Joan, daughter of Edmund of Woodstock, Earl of Kent, second son of Edward I. by his second wife, Margaret of France, famous as the Fair Maid of Kent, married for the third and last time to Edward the Black Prince, by whom she was the mother of Richard II., having been previously the wife, first (it is understood) of Thomas Holland, son of the Lord Holland, secondly, of William Montague, Earl of Salisbury (making the "three contending princes"), and commonly believed to be the Countess of Salisbury from whom the Order of the Garter, according to the well-known story, derived its name.

period, probably formed himself almost exclusively upon the same originals and upon the works of these his predecessors among his own countrymen, and was little, if at all, indebted to or influenced by any French pattern. His poetry, unlike as it is to that of Milton or Spenser, has still a thoroughly English character—an English force and heartiness, and, with all its classicality, not a little even of the freedom and luxuriance of the more genuine English style. Smooth Waller, who preceded him, may have learned something from the modern French poets; and so may Pope, who came after him; but Dryden's fiery energy and "full-resounding line" have nothing in common with them in spirit or manner. Without either creative imagination or any power of pathos, he is in argument, in satire, and in declamatory magnificence, the greatest of our poets. His poetry, indeed, is not the highest kind of poetry, but in that kind he stands unrivalled and unapproached. Pope, his great disciple, who, in correctness, in neatness, and in the brilliancy of epigrammatic point, has outshone his master, has not come near him in easy flexible vigour, in indignant vehemence, in narrative rapidity, any more than he has in sweep and variety of versification. Dryden never writes coldly, or timidly, or drowsily. The movement of verse always sets him on fire, and whatever he produces is a coinage hot from the brain, not slowly scraped or pinched into shape, but struck out as from a die with a few stout blows or a single wrench of the screw. It is this fervour especially which gives to his personal sketches their wonderful life and force: his Absalom and Achitophel is the noblest portrait-gallery in poetry.

It is chiefly as a dramatic writer that Dryden can be charged with the imitation of French models. Of his plays, nearly thirty in number, the comedies for the most part in prose, the tragedies in rhyme, few have much merit considered as entire works, although there are brilliant passages and spirited scenes in most of them. Of the whole number, he has told us that his tragedy of All for Love, or the World well Lost (founded on the story of Antony and Cleopatra), was the only play he wrote for himself; the rest, he admits, were sacrifices to the vitiated taste of the age. His Almanzor, or the Conquest of Granada (in two parts), although extravagant, is also full of genius. Of his comedies, the Spanish Friar is perhaps the best; it has some most effective scenes.

Many others of the poets of this age whose names have been already noticed were also dramatists. Milton's Comus was never acted publicly, nor his Samson Agonistes at all. Cowley's Love's Riddle and Cutter of Coleman Street were neither of them originally written for the stage; but the latter was brought out in one of the London theatres after the Restoration, and was also revived about the middle of the last century. Waller altered the fifth act of Beaumont and Fletcher's Maid's Tragedy, making his additions to the blank verse of the old dramatists in rhyme, as he states in a prologue:—

> In this old play what's new we have expressed
> In rhyming verse distinguish'd from the rest;
> That, as the Rhone its hasty way does make
> (Not mingling waters) through Geneva's lake,
> So, having here the different styles in view,
> You may compare the former with the new.

Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, besides his Rehearsal, wrote a farce entitled the Battle of Sedgmoor, and also altered Beaumont and Fletcher's comedy of The Chances. The tragedy of Valentinian of the same writers was altered by the Earl of Rochester. Sedley wrote three comedies, mostly in prose, and three tragedies, one in rhyme and two in blank verse. And Davenant is the author of twenty-five tragedies, comedies, and masques, produced between 1629 and his death, in 1668. But the most eminent dramatic names of this era are those of Thomas Otway, Nathaniel Lee, John Crowne, Sir George Etheridge, William Wycherly, and Thomas Southerne. Of six tragedies and four comedies written by Otway, his tragedies of the Orphan and Venice Preserved still sustain his fame and popularity as the most pathetic and tear-drawing of all our dramatists. Their licentiousness has necessarily banished his comedies from the stage, with most of those of his contemporaries. Lee has also great tenderness, with much more fire and imagination than Otway; of his pieces, eleven in number—all tragedies—his Theodosius, or the Force of Love, and his Rival Queens, or Alexander the Great, are the most celebrated. Crowne, though several of his plays were highly successful when first produced, was almost forgotten, till Mr. Lamb reprinted some of his scenes in his Dramatic Specimens, and showed that no dramatist of

that age had written finer things. Of seventeen pieces produced by Crowne between 1671 and 1698, his tragedy of Thyestes and his comedy of Sir Courtley Nice are in particular of eminent merit, the first for its poetry, the second for plot and character. Etheridge is the author of only three comedies, the Comical Revenge (1664), She Would if She Could (1668), and the Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter (1676); all remarkable for the polish and fluency of the dialogue, and entitled to be regarded as having first set the example of that modern style of comedy which was afterwards cultivated by Wycherly, Farquhar, Vanbrugh, and Congreve. Wycherly, who was born in 1640, and lived till 1715, produced his only four plays, Love in a Wood, The Gentleman Dancing Master, The Country Wife, and The Plain Dealer, all comedies, between the years 1672 and 1677. The two last of these pieces are written with more elaboration than anything of Etheridge's, and both contain some bold delineation of character and strong satiric writing, reminding us at times of Ben Jonson; but, like him, too, Wycherly is deficient in ease and nature. Southerne, who was only born in the year of the Restoration, and lived till 1746, had produced no more than his two first plays before the Revolution of 1688, —his tragedy of the Loyal Brother in 1682, and his comedy of the Disappointment in 1684. Of ten dramatic pieces of which he is the author, five are comedies, and are of little value; but his tragedies of The Fatal Marriage (1692), Oroonoko (1696), and The Spartan Dame (1719), are interesting and affecting.

It is hardly worth while to mention, under the head of the literature of the age, the seventeen plays of King William's poet laureate, Thomas Shadwell, better remembered by Dryden's immortal nickname of Mac Flecknoe; or the equally numerous brood of the muse of Elkanah Settle, the city poet, Dryden's

> Doeg, whom God for mankind's mirth has made;

or the nine of Shadwell's successor in the laureateship, Nahum Tate, the author of the worst alterations of Shakespeare, the worst version of the Psalms of David, and the worst continuation of a great poem (his second part of the Absalom and Achitophel), extant; or, lastly, although she had more talent than any of these, the seventeen pieces of the notorious Mrs. Aphra Behn— Pope's Astraea,

> Who fairly puts all characters to bed.

This Mrs. Behn, besides her plays, was the authoress of a number of novels and tales, which, amid great impetuosity and turbulence of style, contain some ingeniously contrived incidents and some rather effective painting of the passions.

Prose Writers:—Clarendon.

Eminent as he is among the poets of his age, Dryden is also one of the greatest of its prose writers. In ease, flexibility, and variety, indeed, his English prose has scarcely ever been excelled. Cowley, too, is a charming writer of prose: the natural, pure, and flowing eloquence of his Essays is better than anything in his poetry. Waller, Suckling, and Sedley, also, wrote all well in prose; and Marvel's literary reputation is founded more upon his prose than upon his verse. Of writers exclusively in prose belonging to the space between the Restoration and the Revolution, Clarendon may be first mentioned, although his great work, his History of the Rebellion and Civil Wars, was not published till the year 1702, nor his Life and Continuation of his History, before 1759. His style cannot be commended for its correctness; the manner in which he constructs his sentences, indeed, often sets at defiance all the rules of syntax; but yet he is never unintelligible or obscure—with such admirable expository skill is the matter arranged and spread out, even where the mere verbal sentence-making is the most negligent and entangled. The style, in fact, is that proper to speaking rather than to writing, and had, no doubt, been acquired by Clarendon, not so much from books as from his practice in speaking at the bar and in parliament; for, with great natural abilities, he does not seem to have had much acquaintance with literature, or much acquired knowledge of any kind resulting from study. But his writing possesses the quality that interests above all the graces or artifices of rhetoric —the impress of a mind informed by its subject, and having a complete mastery over it; while the broad full stream in which it flows makes the reader feel as if he were borne along on its tide. The abundance, in particular, with which he pours out his stores of language and illustration in his characters of the eminent persons engaged on both sides of the great contest seems inexhaustible. The historical value of his history, however, is not very considerable; it has not preserved very many

facts which are not to be found elsewhere; and, whatever may be thought of its general bias, the inaccuracy of its details is so great throughout, as demonstrated by the authentic evidences of the time, that there is scarcely any other contemporary history which is so little trustworthy as an authority with regard to minute particulars. Clarendon, in truth, was far from being placed in the most favourable circumstances for giving a perfectly correct account of many of the events he has undertaken to record: he was not, except for a very short time, in the midst of the busy scene: looking to it, as he did, from a distance, while the mighty drama was still only in progress, he was exposed to some chances of misconception to which even those removed from it by a long interval of time are not liable; and, without imputing to him any further intention to deceive than is implied in the purpose which we may suppose he chiefly had in view in writing his work, the vindication of his own side of the question, his position as a partisan, intimately mixed up with the affairs and interests of one of the two contending factions, could not fail both to bias his own judgment, and even in some measure to distort or colour the reports made to him by others. On the whole, therefore, this celebrated work is rather a great literary performance than a very valuable historical monument.

Hobbes.

Another royalist history of the same times and events to which Clarendon's work is dedicated, the Behemoth of Thomas Hobbes of Malmesbury, introduces one of the most distinguished names both in English literature and in modern metaphysical, ethical, and political philosophy. Hobbes, born in 1588, commenced author in 1628, at the age of forty, by publishing his translation of Thucydides, but did not produce his first original work, his Latin treatise entitled De Cive, till 1642. This was followed by his treatises entitled Human Nature and De Corpore Politico, in 1650; his Leviathan, in 1651; his translations in verse of the Iliad and Odyssey, in 1675; and his Behemoth, or History of the Causes of the Civil Wars of England, and of the counsels and artifices by which they were carried on, from the year 1640 to the year 1660, a few months after his death, at the age of ninety-two, in 1679. Regarded merely as a writer of English, there

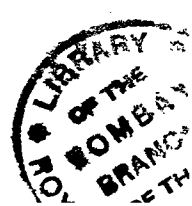
can be little difference of opinion about the high rank to be assigned to Hobbes. He has been described as our first uniformly careful and correct writer;* and he may be admitted to have at least set the first conspicuous and influential example in what may be called our existing English (for Roger Ascham, Sir Thomas Elyot, and one or two other early writers, seem to have aimed at the same thing in a preceding stage of the language), of that regularity of style which has since his time been generally attended to. This, however, is his least merit. No writer has succeeded in making language a more perfect exponent of thought than it is as employed by Hobbes. His style is not poetical or glowingly eloquent, because his mind was not poetical, and the subjects about which he wrote would have rejected the exaggerations of imaginative or passionate expression if he had been capable of supplying such. But in the prime qualities of precision and perspicuity, and also in economy and succinctness, in force and in terseness, it is the very perfection of a merely expository style. Without any affectation of point, also, it often shapes itself easily and naturally into the happiest aphoristic and epigrammatic forms. Hobbes's clearness and aptness of expression, the effect of which is like that of reading a book with a good light, never forsake him—not even in that most singular performance, his version of Homer, where there is scarcely a trace of ability of any other kind. There are said to be only two lines in that work in which he is positively poetical; those which describe the infant Astyanax in the scene of the parting of Hector and Andromache, in the Sixth Book of the Iliad:—

> Now Hector met her with her little boy,
> That in the nurse's arms was carried;
> *And like a star upon her bosom lay*
> *His beautiful and shining golden head.*

But there are other passages in which by dint of mere directness and transparency of style he has rendered a line or two happily enough—as, for instance, in the description of the descent of Apollo at the prayer of Chryses, in the beginning of the poem:—

> His prayer was granted by the deity,
> Who, with his silver bow and arrows keen,
> Descended from Olympus silently,
> In likeness of the sable night unseen.

* Hallam, Lit. of Eur. iv. 316.



As if expressly to proclaim and demonstrate, however, that this momentary success was merely accidental, immediately upon the back of this stanza comes the following:—

> His bow and quiver both behind him hang,
> The arrows chink as often as he jogs,
> And as he shot the bow was heard to twang,
> And first his arrows flew at mules and dogs.

For the most part, indeed, Hobbes's Iliad and Odyssey are no better than travesties of Homer's, the more ludicrous as being undesigned and unconscious. Never was there a more signal revenge than that which Hobbes afforded to imagination and poetry over his own unbelieving and scoffing philosophism by the publication of this work. It was almost as if the man born blind, who had all his lifetime been attempting to prove that the sense which he himself wanted was no sense at all, and that that thing, colour, which it professed peculiarly to discern, was a mere delusion, should have himself at last taken the painter's brush and pallet in hand, and attempted, in confirmation of his theory, to produce a picture by the mere senses of touch, taste, smell, and hearing.*

The great subject of the merits or demerits, the truth or falsehood, of Hobbes's system of metaphysical, ethical, and political philosophy, of course cannot be entered upon here. His works certainly gave a greater impulse to speculation in that field than those of any other English writer had ever before done; even the startling paradoxes with which they abound, and their arrogant and contemptuous tone, co-operated with their eminent merits of a formal kind to arouse attention, and to provoke the investigation and discussion of the subjects of which they treat. It must also be admitted that scarcely any writings of their class contain so many striking remarks; so much acute and ingenious, if not profound and comprehensive, thinking; so much that, if not absolutely novel, has still about it that undefinable charm which even an old truth or theory receives from being born anew in an original mind. Such a mind Hobbes had, if any man ever had. Moreover, it is not necessary to deny that, however hollow or

* It is right, however, to state that Coleridge, in a note to the second (1819) edition of the Friend, *Introd. Essay* iv., admits that in the original edition of that work he had spoken too contemptuously of Hobbes's Odyssey, which when he so wrote of it he had not seen. "It is doubtless," he adds, "as much too ballad-like as the later versions are too epic; but still, on the whole, it leaves a much truer impression of the original."

insufficient may have been the bases of his philosophy, he may have been successful in explaining some particular intellectual phenomena, or placing in a clearer light some important truths both in metaphysics and in morals. But as for what is properly to be called his system of philosophy,—and it is to be observed that, in his own writings, his views in metaphysics, in morals, and in politics are all bound and built up together into one consistent whole,—the question of the truth or falsehood of that seems to be completely settled. Nobody now professes more than a partial Hobbism. If so much of the creed of the philosopher of Malmesbury as affirms the non-existence of any essential distinction between right and wrong, the non-existence of conscience or the moral sense, the non-existence of anything beyond mere sensation in either emotion or intelligence, and other similar negations of his moral and metaphysical doctrine, has still its satisfied disciples, who is now a Hobbist either in politics or in mathematics? Yet, certainly, it is in these latter departments that we must look for the greater part of what is absolutely original and peculiar in the notions of this teacher. Hobbes's philosophy of human nature is not amiss as a philosophy of Hobbes's own human nature. Without passions or imagination himself, and steering his own course through life by the mere calculations of an enlightened selfishness, one half of the broad map of humanity was to him nothing better than a blank. The consequence is, that, even when he reasons most acutely, he is constantly deducing his conclusions from insufficient premises. Then, like most men of ingenious rather than capacious minds, having once adopted his hypothesis or system, he was too apt to make facts bend to that rather than that to facts; a tendency which in his case was strengthened by another part of his character which has left its impression upon all his writings,—a much greater love of victory than of truth.

NEVILE.

The most remarkable treatise on political philosophy which appeared in the interval between the Restoration and the Revolution is Henry Nevile's Plato Redivivus, or a Dialogue concerning Government; which was first published in 1681, and went through at least a second edition the same year. Nevile, who

was born in 1620, and survived till 1694, had in the earlier part of his life been closely connected with Harrington, the author of the Oceana, and also with the founders of the Commonwealth, and he is commonly reckoned a republican writer; but the present work professes to advocate a monarchical form of government. Its leading principle is the same as that on which Harrington's work is founded, the necessity of all stable government being based upon property; but, in a Preface, in the form of an Address from the Publisher to the Reader, pains are taken to show that the author's application of this principle is different from Harrington's. It is observed, in the first place, that the principle in question is not exclusively or originally Harrington's; it had been discoursed upon and maintained in very many treatises and pamphlets before ever the Oceana came out; in particular in A Letter from an Officer in Ireland to His Highness the Lord Protector, printed in 1653, "which was more than three years before Oceana was written." Besides, continues the writer, who is evidently Nevile himself, "Oceana was written (it being thought lawful so to do in those times) to evince out of these principles that England was not capable of any other government than a democracy. And this author, out of the same maxims or aphorisms of politics, endeavours to prove that they may be applied, naturally and fitly, to the redressing and supporting one of the best monarchies in the world, which is that of England." The tenor of the work is throughout in conformity with this declaration.

Although the Plato Redivivus has been reprinted in modern times (by Mr. Thomas Hollis), it is but little known; and it is both very well written, and contains some curious illustrations of the state of opinion, and of other matters, in that day. The argument is carried on in the form of a dialogue, continued through three days or morning meetings, between a Venetian nobleman travelling in England, an English physician, under whose care he is recovering from an attack of illness, and an English gentleman, who is the chief speaker, and may be understood to represent Nevile himself. It is commonly said that the physician, or doctor, is intended for the famous Harvey, the discoverer of the circulation; but this, we think, may be doubted. The conversations are supposed to have taken place only a short time before their publication; and Harvey had died, at a great age, in 1658. In one place (p. 81), in reference to an observa-

tion by the doctor about the property of land in Padua being wholly in the possession of the nobility of Venice, the Venetian nobleman remarks, "I perceive, doctor, by this question, that you have studied at Padua;" to which the doctor replies, "No, really, sir, the small learning I have was acquired in our own university of Oxford, nor was I ever out of this island." This may be meant for a blind, though why anything of the kind should be had recourse to is not apparent; but the fact is that Harvey was abroad when a young man, and did actually study at Padua. There is no allusion anywhere in the book to Harvey's great discovery. Yet the doctor is described as of the first eminence in his profession, and also as a person of great literary reputation both in his own and other countries:—"an eminent physician of our nation, as renowned for his skill and cures at home as for his writings both here and abroad; and who, besides his profound knowledge in all learning, as well in other professions as his own, had particularly arrived at so exact and perfect a discovery of the formerly hidden parts of human bodies, that every one who can but understand Latin may, by his means, know more of anatomy than either Hippocrates or any of the ancients or moderns did or do perceive: and, if he had lived in the days of Solomon, that great philosopher would never have said *Cor hominis inscrutabile* [the heart of man is past finding out]." This points, no doubt, to some great anatomist and writer on anatomy, and the description is sufficiently applicable to suggest Harvey in the first instance; but it seems scarcely specific enough to fix the character upon him, without further evidence. We may note, by-the-by, that at this time, in the latter part of the seventeenth century, it was the custom with physicians in London to pay their professional visits the first thing in the morning, and then to come home to receive patients at their own houses. About the middle of the Second Day's Dialogue, which extends altogether (in the original edition) over 166 pages, the English Gentleman observes that he must hasten through his discourse; "for," says he, "the time runs away, and I know the Doctor must be at home by noon, where he gives daily charitable advice to an infinity of poor people, who have need of his help, and who send or come for it, not having the confidence to send for him, since they have nothing to give him; though he be very liberal too of his visits to such, where he has any knowledge of them." The three friends met at nine in the morning; but the

Doctor also paid another visit to his patient in the evening. It is at that evening visit that the first of the three dialogues, which is very short and merely introductory, is represented as having taken place: at parting the Venetian nobleman says, "It begins to be darkish:—Boy, light your torch, and wait on these gentlemen down."

One of the most remarkable of Nevile's positions is that, upon his principles, there must some time or other ensue a revolution in France. In one place (p. 34) he observes:—

Eng. Gent. The modern despotical powers have been acquired by one of these two ways; either by pretending by the first founder thereof that he had a divine mission, and so gaining not only followers, but even easy access in some places without force to empire, and afterwards dilating their power by great conquests (thus Mahomet and Cingis Can began and established the Saracen and Tartarian kingdoms); or by a long series of wisdom in a prince, or chief magistrate of a mixed monarchy, and his council, who, by reason of the sleepiness and inadvertency of the people, have been able to extinguish the great nobility, or render them inconsiderable; and, so by degrees taking away from the people their protectors, render them slaves. So the monarchies of France and some other countries have grown to what they are at this day; there being left but a shadow of the three States in any of these monarchies, and so no bounds remaining to the regal power. But, since property remains still to the subjects, these governments may be said to be changed, but not founded or established; for there is no maxim more infallible and holding in any science than this in politics, That empire is founded in property. Force or fraud may alter a government; but it is property that must found and eternise it. Upon this undeniable aphorism we are to build most of our subsequent reasoning: in the mean time we may suppose that hereafter the great power of the King of France may diminish much, when his enraged and oppressed subjects come to be commanded by a prince of less courage, wisdom, and military virtue, when it will be very hard for any such king to govern tyrannically a country which is not entirely his own.

Doctor. Pray, Sir, give me leave to ask you, by the way, what is the reason that here in our country, where the peerage is lessened sufficiently, the king has not gotten as great an addition of power as accrues to the crown in France?

Eng. Gent. You will understand that, Doctor, before I have finished this discourse; but, to stay your stomach till then, you may please to know that in France the greatness of the nobility, which has been lately taken from them, did not consist in vast riches and revenues, but in great privileges and jurisdictions, which obliged the people to obey them; whereas our great peers in former times had not only the same great dependences, but very considerable revenues besides, in demesnes and otherwise. This vassalage over the people, which the peers of France had, being abolished,

the power over those tenants, which before was in their lords, fell naturally, and of course, into the crown, although the lands and possessions, divested of those dependences, did and do still remain to the owners; whereas here in England, though the services are for the most part worn out and insignificant, yet, for want of providence and policy in former kings, who could not foresee the danger afar off, entails have been suffered to be cut off; and so two parts in ten of all those vast estates, as well manors as demesnes, by the luxury and folly of the owners, have been within these two hundred years purchased by the lesser gentry and the commons; which has been so far from advantaging the crown, that it has made the country scarce governable by monarchy.

Afterwards (p. 147) we have the following further explanation on the same subject:—

Doctor. You are pleased to talk of the oppression of the people under the King of France, and for that reason call it a violent government, when, if I remember, you did once to-day extol the monarchy of the Turks for well-founded and natural: are not the people in that empire as much oppressed as in France?

Eng. Gent. By no means; unless you will call it oppression for the Grand Signior to feed all his people out of the produce of his own lands. And, though they serve him for it, yet that does not alter the case; for, if you set poor men to work and pay them for it, are you a tyrant, or rather are you not a good commonwealths-man by helping those to live who have no other way of doing it but by their labour? But the King of France, knowing that his people have, and ought to have, property, and that he has no right to their possessions, yet takes what he pleases from them, without their consent, and contrary to law; so that, when he sets them on work, he pays them what he pleases, and that he levies out of their own estates. I do not affirm that there is no government in the world but where rule is founded in property; but I say there is no natural, fixed government but where it is so; and, when it is otherwise, the people are perpetually complaining, and the king in perpetual anxiety, always in fear of his subjects, and seeking new ways to secure himself; God having been so merciful to mankind that he has made nothing safe for princes but what is just and honest.

Noble Ven. But you were saying just now that this present constitution in France will fall when the props fail: we in Italy, who live in perpetual fear of the greatness of that kingdom, would be glad to hear something of the decaying of those props; what are they, I beseech you?

Eng. Gent. The first is the greatness of the present king, whose heroic actions and wisdom have extinguished envy in all his neighbour princes, and kindled fear, and brought him to be above all possibility of control at home; not only because his subjects fear his courage, but because they have his virtue in admiration, and, amidst all their miseries, cannot choose but have something of rejoicing to see how high he hath mounted the empire and honour of their nation. The next prop is the change of their

ancient constitution, in the time of Charles the Seventh, by consent; for about that time, the country being so wasted by the invasion and excursions of the English, the States then assembled petitioned the King that he would give them leave to go home, and dispose of affairs himself and order the government for the future as he thought fit. Upon this his successor, Lewis the Eleventh, being a crafty prince, took an occasion to call the States no more, but to supply them with an *Assemblée des Notables*, which were certain men of his own nomination, like Barebones' parliament here, but that they were of better quality. These in succeeding reigns (being the best men of the kingdom) grew troublesome and intractable; so that for some years the edicts have been verified (that is, in our language, bills have been passed) in the Grand Chamber of the Parliament at Paris, commonly called the *Chambre d'Audience*, who lately, and since the imprisonment of President Brousselles and others during this king's minority, have never refused or scrupled any edicts whatsoever. Now, whenever this great king dies, and the States of the kingdom are restored, these two great props of arbitrary power are taken away. Besides these two, the constitution of the government of France itself is somewhat better fitted than ours to permit extraordinary power in the prince; for the whole people there possessing lands are gentlemen, that is, infinitely the greater part; which was the reason why in their Assembly of Estates the deputies of the provinces (which we call here knights of the shire) were chosen by and out of the gentry, and sat with the peers in the same chamber, as representing the gentry only, called *petite noblesse*. Whereas our knights here (whatever their blood is) are chosen by commoners, and are commoners; our laws and government taking no notice of any nobility but the persons of the peers, whose sons are likewise commoners, even their eldest, whilst their father lives. Now gentry are ever more tractable by a prince than a wealthy and numerous commonalty; out of which our gentry (at least those we call so) are raised from time to time; for whenever either a merchant, lawyer, tradesman, grazier, farmer, or any other, gets such an estate as that he or his son can live upon his lands, without exercising of any other calling, he becomes a gentleman. I do not say but that we have men very nobly descended amongst these; but they have no pre-eminence or distinction by the laws or government. Besides this, the gentry in France are very needy and very numerous; the reason of which is, that the elder brother, in most parts of that kingdom, hath no more share in the division of the paternal estates than the cadets or younger brothers, excepting the principal house with the orchards and gardens about it, which they call *Vol de chapon*, as who should say, As far as a capon can fly at once. This house gives him the title his father had, who was called Seignior, or Baron, or Count of that place; which if he sells, he parts with his baronship, and, for aught I know, becomes in time *roturier*, or ignoble. This practice divides the land into so many small parcels that the possessors of them, being noble, and having little to maintain their nobility, are fain to seek their fortune, which they can find nowhere so well as at the court, and so become the king's servants and soldiers, for they are generally courageous, bold, and of a good mien. None of these can ever advance themselves but

by their desert, which makes them hazard themselves very desperately, by which means great numbers of them are killed, and the rest come in time to be great officers, and live splendidly upon the king's purse, who is likewise very liberal to them, and, according to their respective merits, gives them often, in the beginning of a campaign, a considerable sum to furnish out their equipage. These are a great prop to the regal power, it being their interest to support it, lest their gain should cease, and they be reduced to be poor *provinciaux*, that is country gentlemen, again. Whereas, if they had such estates as our country gentry have, they would desire to be at home at their ease; whilst these (having ten times as much from the king as their own estate can yield them, which supply must fail if the king's revenue were reduced) are perpetually engaged to make good all exorbitances.

Doctor. This is a kind of governing by property too; and it puts me in mind of a gentleman of good estate in our country, who took a tenant's son of his to be his servant, whose father not long after dying left him a living of about ten pound a-year: the young man's friends came to him, and asked him why he would serve now he had an estate of his own able to maintain him. His answer was, that his own lands would yield him but a third part of what his service was worth to him in all; besides, that he lived a pleasant life, wore good clothes, kept good company, and had the conversation of very pretty maids that were his fellow servants, which made him very well digest the name of being a servant.

Eng. Gent. This is the very case. But yet service (in both these cases) is no inheritance; and, when there comes a peaceable king in France, who will let his neighbours be quiet, or one that is covetous, these fine gentlemen will lose their employments, and their king this prop; and the rather because these gentlemen do not depend (as was said before) in any kind upon the great lords (whose standing interest is at court), and so cannot in a change be by them carried over to advance the court designs against their own good and that of their country. And thus much is sufficient to be said concerning France.

OTHER PROSE WRITERS:—CUDWORTH; MORE; BARROW; BUNYAN; &c.

The most illustrious antagonist of metaphysical Hobbism, when first promulgated, was Dr. Ralph Cudworth, the First Part of whose True Intellectual System of the Universe, wherein all the Reason and Philosophy of Atheism is Confuted, was first published in 1678. As a vast storehouse of learning, and also as a display of wonderful powers of subtle and far-reaching speculation, this celebrated work is almost unrivalled in our literature; and it is also written in a style of elastic strength and compass which places its author in a high rank among our prose classics.

Along with Cudworth may be mentioned his friend and brother Platonist, Dr. Henry More, the author of numerous theological and philosophical works, and remarkable for the union of some of the most mystic notions with the clearest style, and of the most singular credulity with powers of reasoning of the highest order. Other two great theological writers of this age were the voluminous Richard Baxter and the learned and eloquent Dr. Robert Leighton, Archbishop of Glasgow. "Baxter," says Bishop Burnet, "was a man of great piety; and, if he had not meddled in too many things, would have been esteemed one of the learned men of the age. He writ near two hundred books; of these three are large folios: he had a very moving and pathetical way of writing, and was his whole life long a man of great zeal and much simplicity; but was most unhappily subtle and metaphysical in everything."* Of Leighton, whom he knew intimately, the same writer has given a much more copious account, a few sentences of which we will transcribe:—"His preaching had a sublimity both of thought and expression in it. The grace and gravity of his pronunciation was such that few heard him without a very sensible emotion. . . . It was so different from all others, and indeed from everything that one could hope to rise up to, that it gave a man an indignation at himself and all others. . . . His style was rather too fine; but there was a majesty and beauty in it that left so deep an impression that I cannot yet forget the sermons I heard him preach thirty years ago."† The writings of Archbishop Leighton that have come down to us have been held by some of the highest minds of our own day—Coleridge for one—to bear out Burnet's affectionate panegyric. But perhaps the greatest genius among the theological writers of this age was the famous Dr. Isaac Barrow, popularly known chiefly by his admirable Sermons, but renowned also in the history of modern science as, next to Newton himself, the greatest mathematician of his time. "As a writer," the late Professor Dugald Stewart has well said of Barrow, "he is equally distinguished by the redundancy of his matter and by the pregnant brevity of his expression; but what more peculiarly characterizes his manner is a certain air of powerful and of conscious facility in the execution of whatever he undertakes. Whether the subject be mathematical, metaphysical, or theological, he seems always to bring to it a mind

* Own Time, i. 180. † Ibid. i. 135.

which feels itself superior to the occasion, and which, in contending with the greatest difficulties, puts forth but half its strength. He has somewhere spoken of his Lectiones Mathematicæ (which it may, in passing, be remarked, display *metaphysical* talents of the highest order) as extemporaneous effusions of his pen; and I have no doubt that the same epithet is still more literally applicable to his pulpit discourses. It is, indeed, only thus that we can account for the variety and extent of his voluminous remains, when we recollect that the author died at the age of forty-six."* But the name that in popular celebrity transcends all others, among the theological writers of this age, is that of John Bunyan, the author of various religious works, and especially of the Pilgrim's Progress. One critic has in our time had the courage to confess in print, that to him this famous allegory appeared "mean, jejune, and wearisome." Our late brilliant essayist, Lord Macaulay, on the other hand, in a paper published in 1830, has written:—"We are not afraid to say, that, though there were many clever men in England during the latter half of the seventeenth century, there were only two minds which possessed the imaginative faculty in a very eminent degree. One of those minds produced the Paradise Lost, the other the Pilgrim's Progress." And, to the end of his life, we find him faithful to the same enthusiasm.† He conceives it to be the characteristic peculiarity of the Pilgrim's Progress "that it is the only work of its kind which possesses a strong human interest." The pilgrimage of the great Italian poet through Hell, Purgatory, and Paradise is of course regarded as not properly an allegory. But high poetry is treated somewhat unceremoniously throughout this paper. Of the Fairy Queen it is said:—"Of the persons who read the first canto, not one in ten reaches the end of the first book, and not one in a hundred perseveres to the end of the poem. Very few and very weary are those who are in at the death of the Blatant Beast. If the last six books, which are said to have been destroyed in Ireland, had been preserved, we doubt whether any heart less stout than that of a commentator would have held out to the end." It must be admitted that, as a story, the Pilgrim's Progress is a great deal more interesting than the

* Dissertation on the Progress of Philosophy, p. 45.

† See the Paper on Ranke's History of the Popes (1840); and again the lively, though slight, sketch of Bunyan's history in the Biographies.

Fairy Queen. And we suspect that, if we are to take the verdict of the most numerous class of readers, it will carry off the palm quite as decidedly from the Paradise Lost. Very few, comparatively, and very weary, we apprehend, are the readers of that great poem, too, who have made their way steadily through it from the beginning of the First Book to the end of the Twelfth. Still, although Bunyan had undoubtedly an ingenious, shaping, and vivid imagination, and his work, partly from its execution, partly from its subject, takes a strong hold, as Macaulay has well pointed out, of minds of very various kinds, commanding the admiration of the most fastidious critics, such, for instance, as Doctor Johnson, while it is loved by those who are too simple to admire it, we must make a great distinction between the power by which such general attraction as this is produced and what we have in the poetry of Milton and Spenser. The difference is something of the same kind with that which exists between any fine old popular ballad and a tragedy of Sophocles or of Shakespeare. Bunyan could rhyme too, when he chose; but he has plenty of poetry without that, and we cannot agree with the opinion expressed by good Adam Clarke, "that the Pilgrim's Progress would be more generally read, and more abundantly useful to a particular class of readers, were it turned into decent rhyme." We suspect the ingenious gentleman, who, in the early part of the last century, published an edition of Paradise Lost turned into prose, had a more correct notion of what would be most useful, and also most agreeable, to a pretty numerous class of readers.

What Lord Macaulay says of Milton's English, though his estimate is, perhaps, a little high-pitched, is worth quoting:—"The style of Bunyan is delightful to every reader, and invaluable as a study to every person who wishes to obtain a wide command over the English language. The vocabulary is the vocabulary of the common people. There is not an expression, if we except a few technical terms of theology, which would puzzle the rudest peasant. We have observed several pages which do not contain a single word of more than two syllables. Yet no writer has said more exactly what he meant to say. For magnificence, for pathos, for vehement exhortation, for subtle disquisition, for every purpose of the poet, the orator, and the divine, this homely dialect, the dialect of plain working men, was perfectly sufficient. There is no book in our literature on

which we would so readily stake the fame of the old unpolluted English language, no book which shows so well how rich that language is in its own proper wealth, and how little it has been improved by all that it has borrowed."

To the names that have been mentioned may be added those of Izaak Walton, the mild-tempered angler and biographer; Sir William Temple, the lively, agreeable, and well-informed essayist and memoirist; and many others that might be enumerated if it were our object to compile a catalogue instead of noticing only the principal lights of our literature.

Progress of Science in England before the Seventeenth Century.

A few far separated names, and a still smaller number of distinct facts, make up the history of the Mathematical and Physical Sciences in England to the latter part of the fifteenth century. Nor from that date to the age of Bacon, or throughout the era of the Tudors, have we perhaps so many as a dozen English names of any note to show in this department. Yet before the end of the sixteenth century scientific speculation and experiment were busy in all the principal countries of continental Europe, and the first steps in the march of discovery had already been taken in various directions. In pure science, Trigonometry, of which the foundations had been laid in the middle ages by the Arabian geometers, had been brought almost to the state in which it still remains by Purbach and his much more illustrious pupil John Müller (Regiomontanus); Müller had also created a new arithmetic by the invention of Decimal Fractions: Algebra, known in its elements since the beginning of the thirteenth century, had been carried to the length of cubic equations by Ferrèo, Tartalea, and Cardan, and of biquadratic by Cardan's pupil, Ludovico Ferrari, and had acquired all the generalization of expression it yet possesses in the hands first of Stifel and soon after of Vieta. The true System of the Universe had been revealed by Copernicus; and Tycho Brahe, although rejecting the hypothesis of his predecessor, as well as clinging to the old superstitions of astrology, both had wonderfully improved the instruments and the art of observation, and had greatly enlarged our knowledge of the heavens. The Variation of the Compass had been ob-

served by Columbus; in Mechanics, the theory of the inclined plane had been investigated by Cardan, the pulley had been explained by Ubaldi, and some cases of the composition of forces, and other propositions in statics, had been solved by Stevinus; in Optics, the use of spectacles, which can be traced back to the early part of the fourteenth century, had been followed by the discovery of the crystalline lens of the eye by Maurolico, and the invention of the camera obscura by Baptista della Porta. The purely physical sciences had also made considerable advances. Mondino of Bologna, who has been called the father of modern Anatomy, had set the example of the practice of dissection so early as the year 1315; and the knowledge of the structure of the human body, and of its functions, had been prosecuted since his time with great success both in Italy and France by Achillini, Berenger (Carpi), Jacques Dubois (Silvius), Charles Etienne (Stephanus), and especially by Vesalius, Fallopius, and Eustachius, whose celebrated Anatomical Tables, completed in 1552, were still the most perfect that had yet been produced when they were first published more than a century and a half after the author's death. In Medicine, the Hippocratic method, revived by Nicholas Leonicenus before the end of the fifteenth century, had been cultivated and advanced by Cop, Ruel, Gonthier, Fuchs, and others; and considerable progress had even been made in emancipating the art from authority, and founding a new school on the basis of experience and common sense, or at least independent speculation, by Fernel, Argentier of Turin, and, above all, by the original and enterprising, though unregulated, genius of Paracelsus. Conrad Gesner, Rondelet, and Aldrovandus, by the large additions they had made to the facts collected by Aristotle, Pliny, Ælian, and other ancient writers, and by their attempts at classification and system, had more than laid the foundations of modern Zoology. In Botany, Otto Brunfels of Strasburg had published his magnificent Herbarum Eicones, which has been regarded as leading the way in the restoration of the science; the route opened by him had been farther explored by Ruel and Fuchs already mentioned (the latter the name commemorated in the well-known Fuchsia), by Matthioli, and others; Conrad Gesner had, about the middle of the sixteenth century, not only collected and arranged all the knowledge of his predecessors, but had given a new form to the science by his own discoveries; many accessions

to his lists had been contributed by Dodens (Dodonæus), Cæsalpinus, John and Caspar Bauhin, and especially by l'Ecluse (Clusius); and before the end of the century the first natural system of plants had been devised and published by Lobel. Finally, Chemistry, in which numerous facts had been long ascertained by Roger Bacon, Geber and the other Arabian physicians, Raymond Lully and the other alchemists, had been cultivated in later times by Basil Valentine (the discoverer of antimony), George Agricola (who first mentions bismuth), and Paracelsus (in whose writings we find the first notice of zinc), and in the hands of Dornaeus, Crollius, and Bartholetus had begun to assume the rudiments of a scientific form; and the remarkable work of Agricola, De Re Metallica, first published in 1546, followed as it was, before the end of the century, by the writings and researches of Ercher, Faehs, and Palissy (the great improver of the manufacture of enamelled pottery), may be said to have already established the science of Mineralogy, and also to have furnished some indications of that of Geology.

In England, meanwhile, much of this progress that had been made in other countries probably remained unknown. We have most to boast of in the physical sciences; medicine was both practised and taught on the revived principles of the ancient physicians, in the early part of the sixteenth century, by the learned Linacre, the translator of Galen, the founder of the medical lectureships at Oxford and Cambridge, and the first president of the College of Physicians, which was incorporated by Henry VIII. in 1518; some valuable works on botany and zoology were published in the latter half of the century by William Turner, particularly the earliest English Herbal, the first part of which appeared at London in 1551, the second and third at Cologne in 1562 and 1568;* the north and south poles of the magnet are described by Robert Norman, a writer on navigation, in 1581; and at the head of the modern sciences of navigation and electricity stands the name of Dr. William Gilbert, whose treatise De Magnete, published in 1600, afforded one of the most remarkable specimens that had then appeared both of ingenious experimenting and of sound inductive reasoning. To Gilbert is assigned the invention of artificial magnets. In the

* Lobel, also, already mentioned, though a Fleming by birth, spent the latter years of his life in England, where James I. gave him the appointment of royal botanist.

pure sciences, and those more immediately dependent upon mathematics, we did very little during this period. Cuthbert Tonstall or Tunstall, Bishop of London, and afterwards of Durham, published a Latin Treatise on Arithmetic (De Arte Supputandi) at London in 1522, which was frequently reprinted abroad in the course of the century. This performance, so far from containing anything new, scarcely attempts even to explain the principles of the old rules and processes which it details and exemplifies; but it has the merit of a simplicity and a freedom from extraneous matter which were very rare in that age.* From what Tonstall says in the dedication of his book to his friend Sir Thomas More, it would appear that, like almost every other nation in Europe, we were already possessed of arithmetical manuals in the vernacular tongue, though of a very low order. Of much greater importance were various works produced about the same date, or a little later, by William Recorde, the physician. "He was the first," says the authority to which we have just referred, "who wrote on arithmetic in English (that is, anything of a higher cast than the works mentioned by Tonstall); the first who wrote on geometry in English; the first who introduced algebra into England; the first who wrote on astronomy and the doctrine of the sphere in English; and finally, the first Englishman (in all probability) who adopted the system of Copernicus."† Recorde's Ground of Arts, a treatise on arithmetic, first published in 1551, was many times reprinted, and kept its ground as a common schoolbook till the end of the seventeenth century. His Pathway to Knowledge, also first printed in 1551, is a treatise of practical geometry, but containing also an account of the theorems in the first four books of Euclid, though without the demonstrations. His Castle of Knowledge, published in 1556, is a treatise on astronomy, both theoretical and practical; and it is in this work that Recorde shows himself, in the words of the writer before us, "as much of a Copernican as any reasonable man could well be at the time; at least as much so (in profession) as was Copernicus himself, who makes no decided declaration of belief in his own

* Notices of English Mathematical and Astronomical writers between the Norman Conquest and the year 1600, in Companion to the Almanac for 1837, p. 30.

† Companion to the Almanac for 1837. An interesting account of Recorde's various works follows, pp. 30—37.

system, but says, it is by no means necessary that hypotheses should be true, or even probable,—it suffices that they make calculation and observation agree."* Recorde's Whetstone of Wit, first published in 1553, is a treatise of algebra, although the author does not use that name except in calling the application of indeterminate numbers to the solution of equations "the rule of Algebor." "In this treatise," says the writer of the Notices, "he appears to have compounded, for the first time, the rule for extracting the square roots of multi-nominal algebraical quantities, and also to have first used the sign =. In other respects he follows Scheubel, whom he cites, and Stifel, whom he does not cite. There is nothing on cubic equations, nor does he appear to have known anything of the Italian algebraists. . . . . Recorde was one of the first who had a distinct perception of the difference between an algebraical operation and its numerical interpretation, to the extent of seeing that the one is independent of the other; and also he appears to have broken out of the consideration of integer numbers to a much greater extent than his contemporaries." In his perception of general results connected with the fundamental notation of algebra, this writer conceives Recorde to show himself superior even to Vieta himself, though of course immeasurably below the Italian in the invention of means of expression. "All his writings considered together," it is added, "Recorde was no common man. It is evident that he did not write very freely at first in English, but his style improves as he goes on. His writings continued to the end of the century to be those in common use on the subjects on which he wrote, though we must gather this more from the adoption of ideas and notation than from absolute citation."† Another English Copernican of this early date was John Field, the author of an Ephemeris for 1557, published in the preceding year. In the earliest English work on cosmography, nevertheless, The Cosmographical Glass, compiled by William Cunningham, London, 1559, the system taught is that of Ptolemy, nor is the least hint of that of Copernicus to be found in the book.‡ In 1573 was published the first English translation of Euclid, professedly by the famous John Dee, the astrologer and *soi-disant* magician, but commonly believed to have been actually the performance of Sir Henry Billingsley, whom, however, the writer

* Companion to the Almanac for 1837, p. 36. † Ibid. p. 37.

‡ Ibid. pp. 35 and 37.

of the Notices before us supposes to have been a pupil of Dee, who only executed the more mechanical part of the undertaking, working under his master's general, if not special, instructions. The first Latin translation of the Elements of Euclid, that of Campanus, had appeared at Venice in 1482 (the original Greek not having been printed till 1530); and the only translations into any modern European tongues which preceded that of Dee were, that of Tartalea into Italian, Venice, 1543; those o Scheubel of the 7th, 8th, and 9th books, and of Holtzmann of the preceding six, into German, Augsburg, 1562 and 1565; and that of Henrion into French, Paris, 1565 (as is supposed). Dee's translation appears either to have been made from the original, or at least to have been corrected by the Greek text. "It contains," says the writer before us, "the whole of the fifteen books commonly considered as making up the Elements of Euclid, and forms the first body of complete mathematical demonstration which appears in our language. For, though the works of Recorde were much less dogmatical than the elementary schoolbooks of the eighteenth, and (for the most part) of the present century, yet they partake of the character which they tended perhaps to perpetuate, and in many instances teach rules without demonstration, or with at most a rough kind of illustration. . . . . The appearance of Euclid in an English form probably saved the credit of the exact sciences, and in this point of view Dee and Billingsley have exercised a material and beneficial influence upon their favourite pursuits."* Of Dee's scientific works the greater number still remain in manuscript; among those that have been published are a Latin treatise on Parallax, and a preface to Field's Ephemeris for 1557 (mentioned above), from which latter it appears that Dee also was a Copernican. Contemporary with this mathematician was Leonard Digges, who died in 1574, after having published various works, most of which were republished, with additions, by his son, Thomas Digges, who lived till 1595. The writings of both father and son relate for the most part to mensuration and the art of war, and are characterized by the application of arithmetical geometry in these departments. One, a work of Thomas Digges, entitled Alae sive Scalae Mathematicae, 1573, being a tract upon parallaxes, undertaken at the suggestion of Lord Burleigh, in consequence of the appearance of the remarkable new star dis-

* Companion to the Almanac for 1837, p. 39.

covered the preceding year by Tycho Brahe in the constellation Cassiopeia, "is," says the author of the Notices, "the first work of an English writer in which we have noticed anything on spherical trigonometry, and the writings of Copernicus are more than once referred to as the source of the subject." From some passages, Thomas Digges appears, this writer thinks, "to have been a believer in the real motion of the earth, and not merely an admirer of the system of Copernicus as an explanatory hypothesis."* On the whole it may be said that nearly the whole history of the advancement of English mathematical science in the sixteenth century is connected with the names of Recorde, Dee, and Digges. If a judgment might be formed from some works published between 1580 and 1600, the author of the Notices is inclined to suppose that, instead of making any progress, science rather declined among us in that interval. "The writers," he observes, "seem to have abandoned what had been newly introduced, and to have betaken themselves to older authors and other notions." Among the productions in question are, the Mathematical Jewel, by John Blagrave, of Reading, 1585, a treatise on a new mathematical instrument, apparently a projection of the sphere, for the construction of problems in astronomy, which proceeds upon the Ptolemaic system of the world, and does not contain a hint of the Copernican, although Copernicus is several times alluded to as an observer; a work on the projection of the sphere, described as "very poor and insufficient," published in 1590, by Thomas Hood, the inventor of an astronomical instrument called Hood's Staff; M. Blundevile's Exercises, containing six treatises on arithmetic, cosmography, &c., 1594, in which is found a set of tables of sines, tangents, and seconds, being the first printed in England, but the author of which expressly denounces the Copernican system of the world as a "false supposition," although he admits that by help of it Copernicus had "made truer demonstrations of the motions and revolutions of the celestial spheres than ever were made before;" and various works by a Thomas Hill, one of which, The School of Skill, London, 1599, is described as "an account of the heavens and the surface of the earth, replete with those notions on astrology and physics which are not very common in the works of Recorde or Blundevile."† Hill notices the scheme of

* Companion to the Almanac for 1837, pp. 40, 41.

† Ibid. p. 43.

Pythagoras and Copernicus, by which, as he expresses it, they "took the earth from the middle of the world, and placed it in a peculiar orb." "But," he adds, "overpassing such reasons, lest by the newness of the arguments they may offend or trouble young students in the art, we therefore (by true knowledge of the wise) do attribute the middle seat of the world to the earth, and appoint it the centre of the whole."

English Science in the Seventeenth Century.—Bacon; Napier.

But the daylight that had already arisen on the continent of Europe was soon to visit our island. The next age, in which Galileo, and Kepler, and Descartes, and Torricelli, and Pascal, and Huygens, revolutionized the entire structure and character of the mathematical and mathematico-physical sciences abroad, was ushered in among us by the bold speculations of Bacon and the brilliant inventions of Napier. Of what has been called the Baconian philosophy, and the amount of the effect it may be supposed to have had in impelling and directing the progress of science, we have already spoken. The writings of Bacon probably did more service by exciting and diffusing the spirit of scientific observation and research, than by any new light they afforded for its guidance, which in truth was no more than it must have furnished to itself as soon as it was fairly awakened and engaged in operating. At all events, neither the pure sciences of figure and number, nor even those of the mixed sciences that have been chiefly advanced by the aid of mathematics and calculation, among which are astronomy, mechanics, and all the principal branches of what is commonly called natural philosophy, can well have received either impulse or direction from Bacon, who was not only entirely unacquainted with geometry and algebra, but evidently insensible even of their value or their use. Of those mathematical and analytical investigations which are the chief glory of the science of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there is not the slightest anticipation in Bacon, nor any direction or suggestion by which they could have been at all promoted. Napier's great invention of logarithms, on the con-

trary, has from his own day to the present hour been one of the most active and efficient servants of all the sciences dependent upon calculation; nor could those of them in which the most splendid triumphs have been achieved have possibly been carried to the height they have reached without its assistance. The Mirifici Logarithmorum Canonis Descriptio was published by Napier at Edinburgh in a small quarto volume in the year 1614; and logarithms received their improved form, or that in which we now possess them, from their inventor and his friend Henry Briggs, in the same or the following year, although they were partially published in that form only in 1618, after the death of Napier, by Briggs, by whom the calculations had been performed. "Many inventions," says a late distinguished historian of science, "have been eclipsed or obscured by new discoveries, or they have been so altered by subsequent improvements that their original form can hardly be recognized, and, in some instances, has been entirely forgotten. This has almost always happened to the discoveries made at an early period in the progress of science, and before their principles were fully unfolded. It has been quite otherwise with the invention of logarithms, which came out of the hands of the author so perfect that it has never yet received but one material improvement—that which it derived, as has just been said, from the ingenuity of his friend in conjunction with his own. Subsequent improvements in science, instead of offering anything that could supplant this invention, have only enlarged the circle to which its utility extended. Logarithms have been applied to numberless purposes which were not thought of at the time of their first construction. Even the sagacity of the author did not see the immense fertility of the principle he had discovered: he calculated his tables merely to facilitate arithmetical, and chiefly trigonometrical computation; and little imagined that he was at the same time constructing a scale whereon to measure the density of the strata of the atmosphere and the heights of mountains, that he was actually computing the areas and the lengths of innumerable curves, and was preparing for a calculus which was yet to be discovered many of the most refined and most valuable of its resources. Of Napier, therefore, if of any man, it may safely be pronounced, that his name will never be eclipsed by any one more conspicuous, or his invention be superseded by anything

more valuable."* In the same volume with his logarithms Napier gave to the world the two very elegant and useful trigonometrical theorems known by his name.

Other English Mathematicians of the Earlier Part of the Seventeenth Century.

Of the other English mathematicians of this age, Harriot, Briggs, and Horrocks may be mentioned as the most famous. Thomas Harriot, who died in 1621, is the author of a work on algebra (Artis Analyticæ Praxis), not published till ten years after his death, which makes an epoch in the history of that science, explaining in their full extent certain views first partially propounded by Vieta, and greatly simplifying some of the operations. To Harriot we also owe the convenient improvement of the substitution of small for the capital letters which had been used up to this time. It appears, too, from his unpublished papers preserved at Petworth (formerly the seat of his patron the Earl of Northumberland), that he is entitled to a high place among the astronomers of his day, having, among other things, discovered the solar spots before any announcement of them was made by Galileo, and observed the satellites of Jupiter within a very few days after Galileo had first seen them.† Henry Briggs, besides the share he had, as mentioned above, in the improvement of logarithms, is entitled to the honour of having made a first step towards what is called the binomial theorem in algebra, finally discovered by Newton. He died in 1630. His Trigonometria Britannica, or tables of the logarithms of sines, &c. (in the preface to which is his distant view of the binomial theorem), was published in 1633, by his friend Henry Gellibrand, who had been for some time associated with him in the calculation of the logarithms. Samuel Horrocks, or Horrox, a native of Toxteth, near Liverpool, was an astronomer of remarkable genius, who died in 1641, at the early age of twenty-two. He was the first person who saw the planet Venus on the body of the sun: his account of this observation (made 24th No-

* Playfair's Dissertation on the Progress of Mechanical and Physical Science (in Encyclopædia Britannica), p. 448.

† These facts, ascertained from the examination of Harriot's papers, then in possession of the Earl of Egremont, were first stated by Zach in the Astronomical Ephemeris of the Berlin Royal Society of Sciences for 1788.

vember, 1639) was printed by Hevelius at the end of his Mercurius in Sole Visus, published at Dantzig in 1662. But Horrocks is principally famous in the history of astronomy as having anticipated, hypothetically, the view of the lunar motions which Newton afterwards showed to be a necessary consequence of the theory of gravitation. This discovery was given to the world by Dr. Wallis, in a collection of Horrocks's posthumous papers which he published at London in 1672. It had been originally communicated by Horrocks in a letter (which has also been preserved, and is to be found in some copies of Wallis's publication) to his friend William Crabtree, whose fate, as well as genius, was singularly similar to his own. Crabtree was a clothier at Broughton, near Manchester, and had made many valuable astronomical observations (a portion of which have been preserved and printed) when he was cut off only a few months after his friend Horrocks, and about the same early age. Another member of this remarkable cluster of friends, whom a common devotion to science united at a time when the fiercest political heats were occupying and distracting most of their countrymen, was William Gascoigne, of Middleton, in Yorkshire, who also died very young, having been killed, about two years after the decease of Horrocks and Crabtree, fighting on the royalist side, at the battle of Marston Moor. He appears to have first used two convex glasses in the telescope, and to have been the original inventor of the wire micrometer and of its application to the telescope, and also of the application of the telescope to the quadrant. A fourth of these associated cultivators of science in the north of England was William Milbourne, who was curate of Brancespeth, near Durham, and who is stated to have made his way by himself to certain of the algebraic discoveries first published in Harriot's work, and likewise to have, by his own observations, detected the errors in the astronomical tables of Lansberg, and verified those of Kepler. The names of several other astronomical observers of less eminent merit who existed at this time in England have also been preserved; among which may be particularised that of Jeremiah Shackerly, the author of a work entitled Tabulæ Britannicæ, published at London in 1653, which is stated to have been compiled mostly from papers left by Horrocks that were afterwards destroyed in the great fire of 1666.* Nor ought

* See a notice of these English astronomers of the earlier half of the seventeenth century, in an article on Horrocks in the Penny Cyclopædia, xii. 305.

we to pass over Edmund Gunter, the inventor of the useful wooden logarithmic scale still known by his name, and also of the sector and of the common surveyor's chain, and the author of several works, one of which, his Canon Triangulorum, first published at London in 1620, is the earliest printed table of logarithmic sines, &c., constructed on the improved or common system of logarithms. Briggs's tables, as has been stated above, were not printed till 1633. Gunter also appears to have been the author of the convenient terms cosine, cotangent, &c., for sine, tangent, &c., of the complement. "Whatever, in short," as has been observed, "could be done by a well-informed and ready-witted person to make the new theory of logarithms more immediately available in practice to those who were not skilful mathematicians, was done by Gunter."* He has moreover the credit of having been the first observer of the important fact of the variation of the compass itself varying. Another eminent English mathematician of this age was John Greaves, the author of the first good account of the Pyramids of Egypt, which he visited in 1638, and of various learned works relating to the Oriental astronomy and geography, and the weights and measures of the ancients. He died in 1652. Briggs, Gunter, Gellibrand, and Greaves were all at one time or other professors in the new establishment of Gresham College, London, which may be regarded as having considerably assisted the promotion of science in England in the early part of the seventeenth century. Its founder, as is well known, was the eminent London merchant Sir Thomas Gresham, who died in 1579, and left his house in Bishopsgate-street for the proposed seminary, although the reserved interest of his widow prevented his intentions from being carried into effect till after her decease in 1596. The seven branches of learning and science for which professorships were instituted were divinity, astronomy, music, geometry, law, physic, and rhetoric; the first four under the patronage of the corporation of the City of London, the three last under that of the Mercers' Company. The chair of geometry, in which Briggs and Greaves had sat, was occupied in a later age by Barrow and Hooke; and that of astronomy, in which Gellibrand had succeeded Gunter, was afterwards filled by Wren. Another Gresham professorship that has to boast of at least two distinguished

* Penny Cyclopædia, xi. 497.

names in the seventeenth century is that of music, which was first held by the famous Dr. John Bull, and afterwards by Sir William Petty.

HARVEY—THE CIRCULATION OF THE BLOOD; ANATOMY, AND NATURAL HISTORY.

In the physical sciences, the event most glorious to England in this age is the discovery of the circulation of the blood by Dr. William Harvey. To our illustrious countryman at least is indisputably due the demonstration and complete establishment of this fact, or what alone in a scientific sense is to be called its discovery, even if we admit all the importance that ever has been or can be claimed for the conjectures and partial anticipations of preceding speculators. Even Aristotle speaks of the blood flowing from the heart to all parts of the body; and Galen infers, from the valves in the pulmonary artery, its true course in passing through that vessel. After the revival of anatomy, Mondino and his successor Berenger taught nearly the same doctrine with regard to the passage of the blood from the right side of the heart to the lungs. Much nearer approaches were made to Harvey's discovery in the latter half of the sixteenth century. The famous Michael Servetus (put to death at Geneva for his antitrinitarian heresies), in a work printed in 1553, distinctly describes the passage of the blood from the right to the left side of the heart, telling us that it does not take place, as commonly supposed, through the middle partition of the heart (the *septum*, which in fact is impervious), but in a highly artificial manner through the lungs, where it is changed to a bright colour; adding, that, after it has thus been transferred from the arterial vein (that is, the pulmonary artery) to the venous artery (that is, the pulmonary vein), it is then diffused from the left ventricle of the heart throughout the arteries (or blood-vessels) of the whole body.* A few years after, in 1559, the pulmonary, or small

* This remarkable passage is often erroneously quoted from the Fifth Book of Servetus's first publication, entitled De Trinitatis Erroribus, which was printed, probably at Basle, in 1531. It occurs, in fact, in the Fifth Book of the First Part of quite another work, his Christianismi Restitutio, published at Vienne in 1553. Of this work only one copy is known to be in existence, which has been minutely described by De Bure, who calls it the rarest of all books. See his Bibliographie Instructive, i. 418—422, where the passage

circulation, as it is called, was again brought forward as an original discovery of his own by Realdus Columbus, in his work De Re Anatomica, published at Venice in that year. And, in 1571, Cæsalpinus of Arezzo, in his Quæstiones Peripateticæ, also published at Venice, inferred from the swelling of veins *below* ligatures that the blood must flow *from* these vessels *to* the heart. So far had the investigation of the subject, or rather speculation respecting it, proceeded when it was taken up by Harvey. From Fabricius ab Aquapendente, under whom he studied at Padua about the year 1600, Harvey, then in his twenty-second or twenty-third year, learned the fact of the existence of valves in many of the veins, which were evidently so constructed as to prevent the flow of blood in these vessels *from* the heart, and at the same time not to impede its motion in the opposite direction. According to Harvey's own account, given in a conversation with Boyle, which the latter has reported in his treatise on Final Causes, it was the existence of these valves in the veins that first suggested to him the idea of his general theory of the circulation. Having satisfied himself by much consideration of the subject, and by many dissections and other careful experiments both on dead and living bodies, that his views were at least in the highest degree probable, he is supposed to have first announced the doctrine of the complete circulation of the blood from the left ventricle of the heart through the whole system back to the right by means of the arteries and veins, in his delivery of the Lumleian lectures on anatomy and surgery before the College of Physicians in 1615. But it was not till the year 1619 that he came before the world with the full demonstration of his theory in his treatise entitled Exercitatio Anatomica de Motu Cordis et Sanguinis in Animalibus. The best proof of the novelty of the views propounded in this work is furnished by the general incredulity with which they were received by the profession in every part of Europe. It is said that there was scarcely an instance known of the doctrine of the circulation being accepted on its first promulgation by any anatomist or medical man who had passed his fortieth year. It is probable, indeed, that even the small circulation, or the passage of the blood from the right

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relating to the circulation of the blood is extracted at length. It is remarkable, however, that what is believed to be the original manuscript, in the author's own handwriting, of the First Part of the Christianismi Restitutio also still survives. See De Bure, i. 423, 424.

to the left ventricle of the heart through the lungs, which was really all that had been hitherto discovered, was as yet but little known, or generally looked upon rather as at most an ingenious supposition than a well-established fact. At all events there can be no doubt that, beyond this point, all was darkness and error—that, notwithstanding some vague, inaccurate generalizations that had been thrown out by Servetus, Columbus, and one or two other writers, the circulation of the blood through the whole course of the arteries and veins, so far from being believed in, had scarcely been heard of or dreamed of by anybody before it was demonstrated by Harvey. The notion, we may say, universally entertained still was, as in the earliest times, that the veins were merely sacks of stagnant or at least unprogressive blood, and the arteries nothing more than air-tubes. Harvey himself, in proceeding to propound his theory, expresses his apprehension lest the opposition of the views he is about to state to those hitherto entertained might make all men his enemies; and it appears that he encountered as much popular as professional opposition and odium by his book, which was looked upon as a daring attack at once upon antiquity, common sense, and Nature herself. It was indeed the beginning and proclamation of a complete revolution in medical science. If the circulation of the blood was true, the greater part of all that had been hitherto taught and believed on the subjects of anatomy and physiology was false. As has been strikingly observed by a writer of our own day, "a person who tries to imagine what the science of medicine could have been while it took no account of this fact, on which, as a basis, all certain reasoning about the phenomena of life must rest, is prepared for what old medical books exhibit of the writhings of human reason in attempts to explain and to form theories while a fatal error was mixed with every supposition."*

Harvey, whose life was extended to the year 1658, contributed to the improvement of anatomical and physiological knowledge by various subsequent publications; and the progress of discovery in this department was also aided by others of our countrymen, particularly by Dr. Nathaniel Highmore (who has given his name to that cavity in the upper jaw called the Antrum Highmorianum), Dr. Francis Glisson (the discoverer of what is called the capsule of Glisson, lying between the liver and the

* Arnott's Elements of Physics, 4th edit. i. 519.

stomach), Dr. Jolyffe, Dr. Thomas Wharton, and Drs. Thomas Willis and Richard Lower, celebrated as the first accurate anatomists of the brain and nerves. Some of the most important publications of the three last mentioned, however, were not produced till after the Restoration. In natural history little was done in England in the earlier half of the seventeenth century. The great authority in botany was still the Herbal, or General History of Plants, of John Gerard, originally published in 1597, which was for the most part merely a hasty and inartificial compilation from Dodonæus, and nearly as destitute of scientific as of literary merit.

Natural Philosophy.

But even in the mathematico-physical sciences, and the other branches of what is commonly called natural philosophy, it is wonderful how little general effect appears to have been produced in this country either by the example or by the actual discoveries of Kepler, Galileo, Torricelli, Pascal, Des Cartes, and their associates and immediate successors abroad, and of Napier, Briggs, Horrocks, and the few others among ourselves whose names have a place in this period of the history of science beside those of their illustrious continental contemporaries;—how little of the general darkness they had dispersed—how little acceptance, or even attention, either their doctrines or the spirit of their philosophy seem to have met with from the common herd of our English speculators and professional men.

Some notion of the barbarous state in which physical science still remained among us after the middle of the seventeenth century may be obtained from a curious volume entitled Archelogia Nova, or New Principles of Philosophy, which was published in the year 1663 by a Dr. Gideon Harvey, who had held the high office of physician to the forces in Flanders, and may be therefore regarded as having stood nearly at the head of his profession. Besides an introduction on philosophy in general, Dr. Harvey's work treats of metaphysics and of natural theology, as well as of natural philosophy or physics; but the last mentioned subject occupies the greater portion of the book. The author makes an apology in his preface for some deficiency of polish in his style; the learned tongues, he would have us

understand, apparently, had occupied his whole time to the exclusion of the vernacular : "It was never my fortune," he says, "to read two sheets of any English book in my life, or even to have had the view of so much as the title-leaf of an English grammar." His English certainly is not always very classical; but the language of his explanations and reasonings would usually be intelligible enough if the matter were equally so. The work, as we have seen, professes to be a *new* system of philosophy; and it does contain, certainly, various new crotchets; but the author's views are founded, nevertheless, in the main upon the old Aristotelian and mediæval notions, and one of his principal aims throughout is to refute the recent innovators who in so many departments had been questioning or denying these long universally admitted *dicta*. Thus, in an early chapter, he falls with great violence upon Van Helmont for his dissent from the authority of Hippocrates, Galen, and Aristotle in various points of physical doctrine, and especially for his rejection of the four elements. Afterwards he attacks Des Cartes, whom he charges with no fewer than seventeen serious errors; amongst which are, that the moon and the other planets borrow their light from the sun"—"that the earth is nothing different from a planet, and consequently that the other planets are inhabitable"—"that the moon is illuminated by the earth"—and "that he assumes most of the erroneous opinions of Copernicus." Harvey, however, professes to be quite a common-sense philosopher: "The only instruments," he says in his preface, "that I have employed in the sounding of the nature of things are the external senses, assuming nothing, or concluding no inference, without their advice and undoubted assent, whether in metaphysics, theology, or natural philosophy. Those terms or notions that only give a confused testimony of their being to the understanding, escaping the evidence of external sense, we have declined, as rocks whereon any one might otherwise easily make shipwreck of his sensible knowledge." His practice, however, does not always exactly square with these professions. Take for example a portion of his demonstration of the existence of atoms, or, as he chooses to call them, *minimas*. "Is not time composed out of instants united, and motion out of spurts joined to one another? That there are instants and spurts the operations of angels do confirm to us." This is hardly keeping within the province of the senses. Nor is what follows in the most

matter-of-fact style;—in grinding any substance, if you continue the operation beyond a certain point, "you shall sooner," says our author, "grind it into clods and bigger pieces than lesser; the reason is, because nature is irritated by the violence and heat of grinding to call the air to its assistance, which glueth its body again together."* The historical deduction of the created universe from the original chaos, and much argumentation that follows touching the essential qualities and forms of things, may be passed over. But we may abridge a speculation about the phenomena of drowning which occurs in one of the chapters.

The true reason, we are told, had never before been laid down by any, why "a man yet living, or any other creature when alive, is much heavier than when he is dead." That such is the fact, in the first place, is assumed from a living man sinking at first when he falls into the water, and rising again to the top after he has been dead for some time. "The reason is," proceeds our philosopher, "because, through the great heat which was inherent in that man, the heavy and terrestrial parts were the more detained from the centre; they, again, being thus detained, moved stronger towards the centre, and therefore make the body heavier during their violent detention, through the great heat which was in the said man when alive; so that, through this great weight, the alive body sinks down to the bottom. Now, when a man is suffocated, and the heat squeezed out of him by the thick compressing parts of the water, then he is rendered less heavy, and immediately leaves the inferior parts of water, as being less weighty than the said profound parts." So that we see one principle of Dr. Gideon Harvey's philosophy is, that weight is partly occasioned by heat—that the same substance is heavier or lighter according as it is hotter or colder. The further explanation, in the like strain, of the reasons that nevertheless detain the body below for a considerable time after it may be supposed to have become as cold as the pressure of the water can well make it, need not be quoted at length:—there still remain, it seems, certain "airy and fiery parts," after the vital flame has been extinguished, which it requires in most cases some days to overcome. A strong, compact, well-set man will be eight or nine days in ascending to the top, "because his heat was deeper, and in greater quantity impacted into his body;" and for the same reason, it is affirmed, such a man will

* Arch. Philos. Nova, Part ii. p. 29.

sink sooner to the bottom, vanishing under water in the twinkling of an eye. "On the contrary," continues our author, "we hear how that weak and tender women have fallen into the river, and have swam upon the water until watermen have rowed to them, and have taken them up; and many weakly women, that were suspected to be witches, being cast into the water for a trial, have been wickedly and wrongfully adjudged to be witches because they were long in sinking; and, alas, it is natural: the reason was, because they were comparatively light; for their earthy parts were not so much detained, and consequently moved not so forcibly downwards." "No doubt," it is added, with *naïveté* enough, "but their coats conduced also somewhat to it." "Whence I collect," concludes the demonstration, "that an ordinary woman is almost one-third longer descending to the bottom, than an ordinary man, because a man, from being a third stronger (because he is a third heavier through the force of the light elements—but I mean not through fat or corpulency) than a woman, is conjectured to have one-third more heat than a woman."* But, if a woman has less heat than a man, she is, in the worthy doctor's opinion, still more decidedly his inferior in other respects, what heat she has, it should seem, being, after all, too much for the weakness of her general organization. "Women," he afterwards observes, "die faster, that is, thicker than men, and are more disposed to sickness than they, because their innate heat and air do effect greater alterations upon their bodies, as having but little earth or compressing density, in comparison to men, to resist the light elements and moderate their irruptions; and, therefore, women seldom reach to any equal or consistent temperature, but are always in changing, which in them after eighteen, twenty, or twenty-four years' expiration is particularly called *breaking*, because then they alter so fast that they swiftly put a period to their days; and that, because their bodies being lax and porous, their innate heat shoots through in particles, and not in *minimas*, without which there can be no durable temperature. Were their bodies heavier and denser, the *minimas* of earth would divide their heat into *minimas*, and reduce it to a temperature. If, then, their innate heat doth constantly cohere in particles, and is never directed into *minimas*, it retaining in that case stronger force than otherwise it could do in *minimas*, it alterates their bodies continually,

* Arch. Philos. Nova, Part ii. p. 106.

and so they never attain to any consistency of age. Many sexagenarian widowers, or men of three-score years of age, do alter less and slower than most women do from their five-and-thirtieth year; wherefore they do rather covet a wife of twenty, because she will just last as long in her prime, or will be as fast in breaking, altering, and changing her temperament, form, and shape in one year as the old man shall alter or change in three or four years; and so they [the old man and his young wife] grow deformed in equal time. Wherefore a man's consistent age may last out the beauties of two or three women, one after the other; and, because of this, some in their mirth have proclaimed a woman after her thirty-fifth year to be fitter for an hospital than to continue a wife. No wonder if a woman be more fierce, furious, and of a more rash, swift judgment than a man; for their spirits and heat, moving in great troops and confluences of particles, must needs move swift, which swiftness of motion is the cause of their sudden rages, nimble tongues, and rash wits, &c. &c."* But our fair readers have probably had enough of this. From many other curious things in the multifarious miscellany, which comprises chemistry, botany, mineralogy, and other subjects besides those now usually included under the name of natural philosophy, we will transcribe a few sentences of what is laid down in various places on the matters that had most engaged the attention of inquirers for more than a century preceding the time of this writer, and in the elucidation of which the greatest progress had been made by Copernicus, Kepler, Galileo, Des Cartes, and some of his own countrymen.

The "old fancy of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristarchus, Seleucus, Niceta, and others," the making the earth revolve around the sun, which had been in modern times revived by Copernicus, we have already seen that our author treats as a very absurd notion. "The earth is," he says, "and must necessarily be, the centre of the world, or of all the other elements, within which it is contained like the yolk of an egg within the white and the shell. I prove the proposition; if the nature of earth be to move conically from the circumference to its own centre through a contiguous gravity, and the nature of air and fire be to be equally diffused from the centre through their levity, *ergo*, the earth must needs fall to the midst of them all, its parts tending circularly and conically to their centre. The earth being arrived

* Arch. Philos. Nova, Part ii. p. 134.

to the centre, it resteth quiet and immovable."* As for the position that the sun is the centre of the system, besides that it is in manifest contradiction to the language of Scripture, it cannot be true, we are told, for this, among other reasons:—"The sun is accounted by most, and proved by us, to be a fiery body, or a flame, and therefore is incapable of attaining to rest in a restless region, which, if it did, its flame would soon diminish through the continual rushing by of the fiery element, tearing its flames into a thousand parts, whose effects would certainly prove destructive to the whole universe, but especially to all living creatures." "The moon," it is added, "is liker (if any) to be the centre, it consisting by far of more earth than the sun, as her minority in body, motion, and degree of brightness do testify."† Our author objects, moreover, to the motion assigned to the earth by the Copernican hypothesis on a variety of grounds. In particular, he argues, it is incredibly rapid for so large and heavy a body. Again, "were the earth a planet or star," he observes, "it is supposed it should cast a light, which is repugnant to its nature, through which, as I have showed before, she is rendered dark, and is the cause of all darkness. Were this absurdity admitted, all our knowledge which hitherto wise men have so laboured to accomplish would be in vain; for, as I said before, earth and earthy bodies must be light, fire and fiery bodies must be heavy, and enjoy their rest; water and waterish bodies must be likewise heavy; the air and airy bodies must be weighty, and enjoy their rest; .... all dark colours must be supposed light; all astronomical appearances, shadows; sounds, tastes, scents, and all mixed bodies must then be understood to be contrary to what really they are." In fine, he concludes, after quoting some passages to show that Scripture likewise, as well as common sense, is plain against the earth's motion, "what need there more words to confute so absurd an opinion?"‡

In a subsequent chapter on the tides, he objects altogether to the imagination entertained by Des Cartes, of the sun and moon having anything to do with that phenomenon. "I deny," he says, in the first place, "his supposition of the earth's motion, as being fabulous, which we have confuted elsewhere. He might as well assert that there be as many Neptunes under water

* Arch. Philos. Nova, Part ii. p. 206.
† Id. p. 208. ‡ Id. p. 209.

moving it circularly, as Aristotle stated intelligences to move the heavens; for even this he might excuse by saying it was but an assumption to prove a phenomenon of the water." "Can any one rationally or probably conceive," again he indignantly asks, "that the sun, much less the moon, being so remote, and whose forcible effects are so little felt by sublunary bodies, should be capable of driving so deep, so large, and so heavy a body as the ocean, which is as powerful to resist through its extreme gravity as all the celestial bodies are potent to move through their extreme lightness? What, because the ocean and the moon move one way, therefore the one must either follow or move the other? What, can a passion so durable and constant, and so equal, depend upon a violent cause? . . . Such fancies are ridiculous, and not to be proposed by any philosopher."* The reason why the greatest height of the waters happens at full moon he conceives to be simply "because the ocean began its course at that instant when the moon after her creation, being placed in opposition to the sun, began hers."† His own explanation of the cause of the tides is, that they are occasioned in some way or other, which he takes great pains, but not to much purpose, to investigate, by the force of their own gravity periodically drawing the waters of the ocean downward; "the waters," he says, "take the beginning of their motion underneath not far from the ground, where their being pressed by the great weight of many hundred fathoms of water lying upon them must needs cause a very swift course of waters removing underneath and withdrawing from that of the surface, which is prevented by a swift motion, because it sinks down to that place whence the subjected parts do withdraw themselves; which gives us a reason why the superficial parts of the sea do not flow by many degrees so swift as the subjected ones."‡ In another chapter he takes up the question of the relative magnitudes of the earth, the sun, and the other heavenly bodies; setting out by asserting that "the body of the sun is by far exceeded in mole and bigness by the weighty globe"§ (that is, by this earth). But what he calls his proofs of this proposition need not be inflicted upon the reader.

* Arch. Philos. Nova, Part ii. p. 303.
† Id. p. 305. ‡ Id. p. 306. § Id. p. 417.

Such were the notions in science which prevailed, probably among the generality even of persons of education and reading, in England at the date of the incorporation and first public establishment of the Royal Society. The origin of this institution is traced to about the year 1645, when, on the suggestion of Mr. Theodore Haak, a native of the Palatinate, a number of persons resident in London, who took an interest in what was called the new or experimental philosophy, began to meet together once a week, sometimes at the lodgings of one of their number, Dr. Jonathan Goddard, a physician, in Wood Street, who kept an operator in his house for grinding glasses for telescopes; sometimes at apartments in Cheapside, sometimes in Gresham College or its neighbourhood. Such is the account given by Dr. Birch, on the authority of Dr. John Wallis, the eminent mathematician, who was himself a member of the association thus formed.* Besides Wallis, Haak, and Goddard, it included Dr. Wilkins (afterwards Bishop of Chester, and the author of several curious scientific projects and speculations), Dr. George Ent (the friend of Harvey, and defender of his great discovery), Dr. Glisson, already mentioned, Dr. Christopher Merret, who afterwards distinguished himself by his experimental investigations, Mr. Samuel Foster, professor of astronomy in Gresham College, and several others whose names have not been recorded. "Their business was," says Birch, "precluding affairs of state and questions of theology, to consider and discuss philosophical subjects, and whatever had any connexion with or relation to them—as physic, anatomy, geometry, astronomy, navigation, statics, magnetism, chemistry, mechanics, and natural experiments, with the state of these studies as then cultivated at home or abroad."

In some letters written in 1646 and 1647 we find the Honourable Robert Boyle, then a very young man, making mention of what he calls "our new Philosophical or Invisible College," by which he is supposed to mean this association. Wilkins, Wallis, and Goddard were all withdrawn to Oxford by being

* History of the Royal Society of London, 1756, i. 1. Dr. Birch refers to Dr. Wallis's account of his own Life in the Preface to Hearne's edition of Langtoft's Chronicle, i. 161. What is here called an account of his life is a letter from Wallis to his friend Dr. Thomas Smith.

appointed to offices in the university in the course of the years 1648, 1649, and 1651; and by their exertions a society similar to the London one was now established in that city, which was joined by Dr. Seth Ward, then Savilian professor of astronomy, afterwards successively Bishop of Exeter and Salisbury, by Dr. Ralph Bathurst, Dr. Thomas Willis, Dr. (afterwards Sir) William Petty (all physicians), and divers others. The Oxford society met at first in Dr. Petty's lodgings, in the house of an apothecary, whose boxes and phials furnished them with many of the chemical substances they wanted for inspection or experiment; after Petty went to Ireland in September, 1652, the meetings seem to have been discontinued for some years; but in February, 1658, we find Petty, in a letter from Dublin to Boyle, observing that he had not heard better news than that the club was restored at Oxford; and shortly before that date the members appear to have, in fact, begun to assemble again at Dr. Wilkins's apartments in Wadham College, whence, on the appointment of Wilkins, in September, 1659, to the mastership of Trinity College, Cambridge, they transferred themselves to the lodgings of Mr. Boyle, who had come to Oxford in June, 1654, and continued to reside there till April, 1668.

All this while the original London society is believed to have met once or twice a week for the greater part of the year without interruption, those of the members who had removed to Oxford rejoining it whenever they chanced to come up to town. In course of time many of the members of the Oxford club became resident in London; and it is certain that, by the year 1659, the meetings had come to be held pretty regularly in term time at Gresham College every week, either after the Wednesday's lecture on astronomy by Wren, or after the Thursday's on geometry by Mr. Lawrence Rooke, sometimes, perhaps, on both days. Among the members at this time are mentioned Lord Brouncker and John Evelyn. The confusion in which public affairs were involved in the latter part of the year 1659, when Gresham College was turned into a barrack for soldiers, dispersed the philosophers; but "their meetings," continues their historian, "were revived, and attended with a larger concourse of persons, eminent for their characters and learning, upon the Restoration, 1660; and, as appears from the journal book of the Royal Society, on the 28th of November that year, the Lord Viscount Brouncker, Mr. Boyle, Mr. Bruce, Sir Robert Moray, Sir Paul

Neile, Dr. Wilkins, Dr. Goddard, Dr. Petty, Mr. Balle, Mr. Rooke, Mr. Wren, and Mr. Hill, after the lecture of Mr. Wren at Gresham College, withdrew for mutual conversation into Mr. Rooke's apartment, where, amongst other matters discoursed of, something was offered about a design of founding a college for the promoting of physico-mathematical experimental learning. And, because they had these frequent occasions of meeting with one another, it was proposed that some course might be thought of to improve this meeting to a more regular way of debating things; and that, according to the manner in other countries, where there were voluntary associations of men into academies for the advancement of various parts of learning, they might do something answerable here for the promoting of experimental philosophy."* It was thereupon agreed that the meetings should be continued at three o'clock in the afternoon on every Wednesday, in Mr. Rooke's chamber at Gresham College during term time, and at Mr. Balle's apartments in the Temple in the vacation. It was also arranged that every member of the society should pay ten shillings on his admission, and a shilling a week besides so long as he remained a member. At this meeting, which may be regarded as that at which the present Royal Society was actually founded, Dr. Wilkins presided. From the subsequent admissions it appears that only the twelve persons present on this occasion were considered as members; all others, even those who had attended the meetings kept before the Restoration, had to be regularly proposed and balloted for. A list, however, was now drawn out of "such persons as were known to those present, and judged by them willing and fit to be joined with them in their design, and who, if they should desire it, might be admitted before any others;" among whom we find the names of Lord Hatton, Mr. (afterwards Lord) Brereton, who had been a member of the old club, Sir Kenelm Digby, Mr. Evelyn, Mr. Slingsbey (another attendant at the meetings before the Restoration), Mr. (afterwards Sir John) Denham, Dr. Ward, Dr. Wallis, Dr. Glisson, Dr. Ent, Dr. Bate (author of the Elenchus Mortuum), Dr. Willis, Dr. Cowley (the poet), Mr. Ashmole (founder of the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford), Mr. Oldenburg (for many years secretary), &c.

At the next meeting, on that day week, Sir Robert Moray informed the members, from the king, that his majesty had been

* Birch, i. 3.

made acquainted with their design, and that he highly approved of it, and would be ready to give it his encouragement. It appears to have been principally through Moray, who held the office of a sort of private secretary to Charles II., that the Society acquired and was enabled to keep up its interest at court. Burnet, who knew him well, calls him "the first former of the Royal Society," and adds that "while he lived he was the life and soul of that body." "He was," says the bishop, "the most universally beloved and esteemed by men of all sides and sorts of any man I have ever known in my whole life. He was a pious man, and in the midst of armies and courts he spent many hours a day in devotion, which was in a most elevating strain. He had gone through the easy parts of mathematics, and knew the history of nature beyond any man I ever yet knew. He had a genius much like Peiriski, as he is described by Gassendi."* On the 16th of January, 1661, we find the king sending the Society two loadstones by Sir Robert Moray, with a message, "that he expected an account from the Society of some of the most considerable experiments upon them."† Charles seems to have taken much interest in the Society from the first; in the account of the meeting of the 4th of September this year, it is noted that "a proposition of Mr. Hobbes, for finding two mean proportionals between two straight lines given, was delivered into the Society by Sir Paul Neile from the king, indorsed with his majesty's own hand, and was ordered to be registered;"‡ and on the 16th of October Sir Robert Moray acquaints the Society that he and Sir Paul Neile had kissed the king's hand in their name; on which he was desired to return their most humble thanks to his majesty "for the favour and honour done them, of offering himself to be entered one of their Society."§ "When the Society first addressed themselves to his majesty," Bishop Spratt tells us, "he was pleased to express much satisfaction that this enterprise was begun in his reign. He then represented to them the gravity and difficulty of their work; and assured them of all the kind influence of his power and prerogative. Since that he has frequently committed many things to their search; he has referred many foreign rarities to their inspection; he has recommended many domestic improvements to their care; he has demanded the result of their trials in many appearances

* Own Time, i. 59.
† Birch, i. 10.
‡ Id. p. 42.
§ Id. p. 50.

of nature; he has been present, and assisted with his own hands, at the performing of many of their experiments, in his gardens, his parks, and on the river."*

On the 15th of July, 1662, a charter was passed incorporating the Society under the name of the Royal Society, and constituting William Lord Brouncker the first president; Moray, Boyle, Brereton, Digby, Neile, Slingsbey, Petty, Drs. Wallis, Timothy Clarke, Wilkins, and Ent, William Areskine, Esq., cup-bearer to his majesty, Drs. Goddard and Christopher Wren, William Balle, Esq., Matthew Wren, Esq., Evelyn, T. Henshaw, Esq., Dudley Palmer, Esq., and Oldenburg, the first council; Balle, the first treasurer; and Wilkins and Oldenburg the first secretaries. And some additional privileges were granted by a second charter which passed the privy seal on the 22nd of April, 1663.† From a list drawn up on the 21st of May, in that year, it appears that the number of members was then a hundred and fifteen.‡ Among them, besides the names that have been already mentioned, are those of James Lord Annesley, John Aubrey, Esq. (the author of the Miscellanies), George Duke of Buckingham, George Lord Berkeley, Robert Lord Bruce, Isaac Barrow, B.D., Walter Lord Cavendish, Dr. Walter Charleton, John Earl of Crawford and Lindsay, Henry Marquis of Dorchester, William Earl of Devonshire, John Dryden, Esq. (the poet), John Graunt, Esq. (author of the Observations upon the Bills of Mortality), Mr. Robert Hooke (already a very active member, although the only one whose name stands thus undecorated by any designation either civil or academic), Alexander Earl of Kincardine, John Lord Lucas, John Viscount Massareene, James Earl of Northampton, Dr. Walter Pope (author of the well-known song called the Old Man's Wish, and other pieces of verse), Edward Earl of Sandwich, Thomas Spratt, M.A. (afterwards Bishop of Rochester), Edmund Waller, Esq. (the poet). The Royal Society, we thus perceive, besides the array of titled names which it doubtless owed in part to the patronage of the court, had at this time to boast of a considerable sprinkling of the cultivators of poetry and general literature among its men of science and experimentalists.§ It had however been specially

* History of the Royal Society, Lond. 1667, p. 133.

† See the first Charter in Birch, i. 88—96; the second, 221—230.

‡ Birch, i. 239.

§ On the 7th of December, 1664, "it being suggested that there were several persons of the Society whose genius was very proper and inclined to

constituted for the promotion of natural or physical science: *Regalis Societas Londini pro scientia naturali promovenda*, or the Royal Society of London for improving natural knowledge, is the full title by which it is described in the second royal charter, and in the English oath therein directed to be taken by the president.*

We have a curious account of the Royal Society at this early date from Louis XIV.'s historiographer, M. Samuel Sorbiere, who came over to this country in 1663, and after his return to France published a narrative of his adventures.† Sorbiere's book is on the whole a somewhat coxcombical performance, and, of course, in a hastily written description of a foreign country, in which he spent only a few months, he has made several mistakes as to matters of fact; but he may be trusted at least for the outside appearances of things which he saw with his own eyes, and which he evidently does not intend to misrepresent. One of his principal objects in visiting England, he states, was to renew his acquaintance with some old friends, and to be introduced to other learned persons here. One of those whom he had formerly known was Mr. Hobbes, whom, he tells us, he found much the same man as he had seen him fourteen years before, "and even," he adds, "in the same posture in his chamber as he was wont to be every afternoon, wherein he betook himself to his studies after he had been walking about all the morning. This he did for his health, of which he ought to have the greatest regard, he being at this time seventy-eight years of age. Besides which he plays so long at tennis once a week till he is quite tired. I found very little alteration in his face, and none at all in the vigour of his mind, strength of memory, and cheerfulness

improve the English tongue, and particularly for philosophical purposes, it was voted that there be a committee for improving the English language, and that they meet at Sir Peter Wyche's lodgings in Gray's Inn once or twice a month, and give an account of their proceedings to the Society when called upon." A committee of twenty-one members was accordingly appointed for this purpose: among them were Dryden, Evelyn, Spratt, and Waller.—Birch, i. 499, 500.

* In the first Charter it is called simply the Royal Society (Regalis Societas); but its object is there still farther limited to mere experimental science—"ad rerum naturalium artiumque utilium scientias experimentorum fide ulterius promovendas."

† Relation d'un Voyage en Angleterre, 1664: translated under the title of A Voyage to England, containing many things relating to the state of learning, religion, and other curiosities of that kingdom, 1709.

of spirit; all which he perfectly retained."* Hobbes, who in fact was at this time no more than seventy-five, and who lived and wrote for sixteen or seventeen years longer, had already involved himself in his famous mathematical controversy with Dr. Wallis and the new society, which speedily became so angry and scurrilous on both sides—especially on that of Hobbes, who was in the wrong; but it does not appear either that Sorbiere was prepossessed against the Society, or they against him in the first instance, by his connexion with their great assailant. Perhaps, however, the circumstance was remembered afterwards, when some of the more zealous members found themselves dissatisfied with the Frenchman's published narrative, and Spratt, already the appointed historian of the Society, and vain of his reputation as the finest or smartest writer of the day, undertook the task of exposing its blunders and calumnies.†

The Society elected Sorbiere a member while he was in England; and he on his part speaks with great respect both of the Society as a body and of those of its members whom he has occasion to mention. Of Sir Robert Moray, he says, "It was a wonderful, or rather a very edifying thing, to find a person employed in matters of state, and of such excellent merit, and one who had been engaged a great part of his life in warlike commands and the affairs of the cabinet, apply himself in making machines in St. James's Park and adjusting telescopes. All this we have seen him do with great application. . . . . I made him frequent visits, very much to my satisfaction, having never had the honour to see him but I learned something of him." He adds, "He was so kind as to introduce me to Prince Rupert, who is of the same frank temper, kind, modest, very curious, and takes no state upon him. . . . . Sir Robert Moray brought me likewise into the king's presence, who is a lover of the curiosities of art and nature. He took the pains to bring me into the Royal Society, and had the goodness, almost every time that I attended there, to seat me next himself, that so he might interpret to me whatever was said in English."‡

An account is afterwards given of the origin of the Royal Society, in which we are told that during the late civil war

* English Translation, p. 27.

† Observations on M. de Sorbiere's Voyage into England; written to Dr. Wren, professor of astronomy in Oxford, 1708 (first printed in 1665).

‡ English Translation, p. 31.

"persons of quality, having no court to make, applied themselves to their studies; some turning their heads to chemistry, others to mechanism, mathematics, or natural philosophy." "Those same persons," proceeds our author, "who had found their account in their respective studies, would not, after the king's return. . . . be guilty of so much ingratitude as to leave them and take upon them an idle court life; but they chose rather to intersperse these sorts of entertainments with their other diversions; and so the Lords Digby, Boyle, Brouncker, Moray, Devonshire, Worcester, and divers others (for the English nobility are all of them learned and polite), built elaboratories, made machines, opened mines, and made use of an hundred sorts of artists to find out some new invention or other. The king himself is not devoid of this curiosity; nay, he has caused a famous chymist to be brought over from Paris, for whom he has built a very fine elaboratory in St. James's Park. But his majesty more particularly takes great delight in finding out useful experiments in navigation, wherein he has immense knowledge."* He then notices with great admiration Boyle's pneumatic engine, or air-pump, and other inventions of some of the members of the Royal Society. He states, by mistake, that the Society had already begun a library adjoining to the gallery through which they passed from their hall of meeting in Gresham College: "they have as yet no library," Spratt observes, "but only a repository for their instruments and rarities."† Spratt is scandalised at the triviality of the description given of the meetings of the Society; but the "mean circumstances," the enumeration of which he denounces as unworthy of so noble a theme, are interesting enough at this distance of time. First is noticed the usher or beadle, "who goes before the president with a mace, which he lays down on the table when the Society have taken their places:" this is the gilt silver mace the Society still possess, the gift of their first royal patron. It was till recently believed to be the same which was formerly used in the House of Commons, and which was removed from the table by one of the soldiers on Cromwell's order to "take away that bauble," when he came down and turned out the remnant of the Long Parliament on the famous 20th of April, 1653; but this appears to be a mistake. "The room where the Society meets," the account goes on, "is large and wainscoted; there is a large table before

* English Translation, p. 33. † Observations, p. 166.

the chimney, with seven or eight chairs covered with green cloth about it, and two rows of wooden and matted benches to lean on, the first being higher than the other, in form like an amphitheatre. The president and council are elective; they mind no precedency in the Society, but the president sits at the middle of the table in an elbow chair, with his back to the chimney. The secretary sits at the end of the table on his left hand, and they have each of them pen, ink, and paper before them. I saw nobody sit on the chairs; I think they are reserved for persons of great quality, or those who have occasion to draw near to the president. All the other members take their places as they think fit, and without any ceremony; and, if any one comes in after the Society is fixed, nobody stirs, but he takes a place presently where he can find it, that so no interruption may be given to him that speaks. The president has a little wooden mace in his hand with which he strikes the table when he would command silence; they address their discourse to him bareheaded till he makes a sign for them to put on their hats; and there is a relation given in a few words of what is thought proper to be said concerning the experiments proposed by the secretary. There is nobody here eager to speak, that makes a long harangue, or intent upon saying all he knows; he is never interrupted that speaks, and differences of opinion cause no manner of resentment, nor as much as a disobliging way of speech; there is nothing seemed to me to be more civil, respectful, and better managed than this meeting; and, if there are any private discourses held between any while a member is speaking, they only whisper, and the least sign from the president causes a sudden stop, though they have not told their mind out. I took special notice of this conduct in a body consisting of so many persons, and of such different nations. . . . In short, it cannot be discerned that any authority prevails here; and, whereas those who are mere mathematicians favour Des Cartes more than Gassendus, the *literati*, on the other side, are more inclined to the latter. But both of them have hitherto demeaned themselves with so much moderation that no different hypotheses or principles have been a means to break in upon the good harmony of the Society."* Spratt takes fire at this statement about the authority of Descartes with the mathematicians, and of Gassendi with the men of general learning: "Neither of these two men," he says, "bear any sway amongst

* English Translation, p. 38.

them; they are never named there as dictators over men's reasons; nor is there any extraordinary reference to their judgments."*

The Royal Society began to publish the most important of the papers communicated to it, under the title of the Philosophical Transactions, in March, 1665; and the work has been continued from that date to the present day, with the exception of the four years from January, 1679, to January, 1683 (for which space the deficiency is partly supplied by Hooke's volume of Philosophical Collections), of the three years and a month from December, 1687, to January, 1691, and of various shorter intervals, amounting in all to nearly a year and a half more, previous to October, 1695. From this work, or either of its abridgments—the first, begun by Mr. Lowthorp and brought down by a succession of continuators to the middle of last century; the second, and best, by the late Dr. Charles Hutton and assistants, extending to the year 1800—and from the histories of Bishop Spratt and Dr. Birch, the former, however, coming down only to the year 1667, in which it was published—may be learned the general character of the inquiries with which the Royal Society occupied itself in the earlier stage of its existence, and which, we may hence infer, formed the kind of science at that time chiefly cultivated in this country. It will be found that mathematical and analytical investigations then bore an extremely small proportion to the bulk of the business at the Society's meetings; which, indeed, did not consist much of mere speculation of any kind, but rather of exhibitions and experiments, of details as to the useful arts, accounts of new inventions, communications of remarkable facts, phenomena, and incidents in natural history, chemistry, medicine, and anatomy,—of a great deal, in truth, that would now probably be accounted to belong only to the curiosities or popular pastimes of science. A list drawn up 30th March, 1664, presents the members as then distributed into the following seven committees (besides an eighth for correspondence): 1. Mechanical, to consider and improve all mechanical inventions; 2. Astronomical and Optical; 3. Anatomical; 4. Chemical; 5. Georgical; 6. For Histories of Trades; 7. For collecting all the Phenomena of Nature hitherto observed, and all experiments made and recorded.† Here we have no mention at all of either mathematical or algebraical science; the cultivation of these branches sepa-

* Observations, p. 165. † Birch, i. 406, 407.

rately, or for their own sake, does not seem to have then been considered as coming within the design of the Society. Nor were they extensively applied even in mechanical, astronomical, and optical investigations. If we take up the first volume of Hutton's abridgment of the Philosophical Transactions, which comprises the first seven volumes of the original publication, extending over seven years, from 1665 to 1672 inclusive, we shall find that of about 450 communications (besides nearly 200 reviews of books), only nine come under the heads of algebra and geometry, or pure science; that of about 140 relating to mechanical philosophy, and arranged under the heads of dynamics, astronomy, chronology, navigation, gunnery, hydraulics, pneumatics, optics, electricity, magnetism, pyrotechny, thermometry, etc., nine in every ten are mere accounts of observations and experiments, or explanations and hypotheses in which there is little or no mathematics; and that the remaining 300, or two-thirds of the whole, belong to the departments of natural history (divided into zoology, botany, mineralogy, geography, and hydrology), of chemical philosophy (divided into chemistry, meteorology, and geology), of physiology (divided into physiology of animals, physiology of plants, medicine, surgery, and anatomy), and of the arts (divided into mechanical, chemical, and the fine arts).* So that at this time only about one paper in fifty was purely mathematical or analytical, and only one in three on subjects to which the science of lines and quantities was applicable—for chemistry was not yet in a condition to be treated otherwise than tentatively, and, if mathematical reasoning had been attempted in medicine, the attempt was a failure and a folly.

The history of the Royal Society, however, is very nearly the whole history of English science, both physical and mathematical, from the date of its institution to the end of the seventeenth century. Almost all the scientific discoveries and improvements that originated in this country during that century were made by its members, and a large proportion of them are recorded and were first published in its Transactions. But the Royal Society, it is to be remembered, was, after all, still more an effect than a cause, still more an indication than a power; and, although it no doubt gave an impulse to the progress of science by the communication and union which it helped to maintain among the

* In Hutton's table of contents a few papers are repeated under different heads, but this cannot much affect the calculation.

labourers in that field, by some advantages which it derived from its position, and by the spirit which it excited and diffused, the advance which was made under its auspices, or partly by force of its example, would probably have been accomplished little less rapidly without its assistance; for the time was come, and the men with it, who assuredly would not have been hindered from doing their work, although such an institution had never been called into existence. But it was part of the work they were sent to do to establish such an institution, which, although not the tree on which science grows, is both a convenient and ornamental shelter for the gathered fruit, and may be made serviceable for various subsidiary purposes which even philosophers are entitled to hold in some regard in a refined and luxurious age.

The Steam-Engine.

One invention, dating after the Restoration, of which much has been said in recent times, is assigned to an individual whose name does not occur in the roll of the members of the Royal Society—the first Steam-Engine, which is commonly believed to have been both described and constructed by the Marquess of Worcester—the same whose negociations with the Irish Catholics, when he was Earl of Glamorgan, make so remarkable a passage in the history of the contest between Charles I. and the parliament. The Marquess of Worcester's famous publication entitled A Century of the names and scantlings of such Inventions as at present I can call to mind to have tried and perfected (my former notes being lost), etc., was first printed in 1663. "It is a very small piece," says Walpole, "containing a dedication to Charles II.; another to both Houses of Parliament, in which he affirms having in the presence of Charles I. performed many of the feats mentioned in his book; a table of contents; and the work itself, which is but a table of contents neither, being a list of a hundred projects, most of them impossibilities, but all of which he affirms having discovered the art of performing. Some of the easiest seem to be, how to write with a single line; with a point; how to use all the senses indifferently for each other, as, to talk by colours, and to read by the taste; to make an unsinkable ship; how to do and to prevent the same thing; how to sail against wind and tide; how to form an universal character; how to con-

verse by jangling bells out of tune; how to take towns or prevent their being taken; how to write in the dark; how to cheat with dice; and, in short, how to fly."* "Of all these wonderful inventions," adds Walpole, "the last but one seems the only one of which his lordship has left the secret;" but the wit, who characterises the whole production as "an amazing piece of folly," has missed the most interesting of all the marquess's projects, the sixty-eighth in the list, which he entitles "An admirable and most forcible way to drive up water by fire," and which appears from his description to have been, in fact, a species of steam-engine. His language implies, too, that the idea had been actually carried into effect: he speaks of having made use of a cannon for his boiler; and he says, "I have seen the water run like a constant fountain-stream forty feet high; one vessel of water rarefied by fire driveth up forty of cold water." And Sorbiere, when here in 1663, appears to have seen the engine at work—although the superficial, chattering Frenchman has described it, and probably understood it, so imperfectly as to have taken no note even of the nature of the power by which it was made to act:—"One of the most curious things I had a mind to see," he writes, "was a water-engine invented by the Marquess of Worcester, of which he had made an experiment. I went on purpose to see it at Fox Hall (VauxhalI), on the other side of the Thames, a little above Lambeth, the Archbishop of Canterbury's palace, standing in sight of London. One man by the help of this machine, raised four large buckets full of water in an instant forty feet high, and that through a pipe of about eight inches long; which invention will be of greater use to the public than that very ingenious machine already made use of, and raised upon wooden work above Somerset House, that supplies part of the town with water, but with great difficulty, and in less quantity than could be wished."†

Forty years before the publication of the Century of Inventions, it is to be observed, a French engineer, Solomon de Caus, in a volume published at Paris entitled Les Raisons des Forces Mouvantes,‡ had not only called attention to the power of steam

* Royal and Noble Authors.

† Journey to England, p. 29.

‡ Not to be confounded with another work entitled Traité des Forces Mouvantes; par Mons. de Camus, Gentilhomme Lorrain;" 8vo. Paris, 1722; in which, although of so much later date, steam as a moving power does not appear to be mentioned.

produced in a close vessel, but had proposed a mode of raising water by means of such a force, the principle of which, as far as can be collected, appears to have been the same with that of the Marquess of Worcester's contrivance. It is possible that the marquess may have taken the idea from this book, which would be the more likely to attract attention in England from the circumstance of De Caus having come over to this country in 1612 in the train of the Elector Palatine, and resided here for some years; but still the English nobleman remains, as far as is known, the first person who ever actually constructed a steam-engine, supposing the water-engine seen by Sorbiere to have been such. Twenty years later, as appears from the author's manuscript now in the British Museum, the same idea that had been already published by De Caus, and realised by the Marquess of Worcester, was proposed as his own by Sir Samuel Morland in a work on machines for raising water, written in French, and addressed to Louis XIV.;* although the passage was omitted from the book when it was soon afterwards sent to the press. About 1690, Denis Papin, a native of France, but then and for a great part of his life resident in this country, discovered and applied the two important improvements of making the expansive force of the steam act by means of a piston and of producing a reaction of the piston through the condensation of the steam by means of cold; he is also the inventor of the safety-valve, which, however, he only applied in the cooking apparatus called his digester, where steam was employed merely to produce heat, not in any machine where that agent was the moving power. In 1698 Captain Savery contrived the first steam-engine which can be said to have been found practically useful; he employed the principle of the condensation of the steam by cold, not to permit the relapse of a piston, as Papin had done, but to effect the elevation of the water directly by allowing it to ascend into the vacuum so produced. From this date steam may be considered to have ranked as an important working power in this country, although Savery's engine was never applied to any other purpose except the raising of water, which, too, it could only effect from a very inconsiderable depth, the vacuum, by means of which it principally operated, ceasing to act as soon as the column of water came to balance an atmospheric column of the same base, in other words, as soon as the water had ascended through the

* Recueil de Machines pour l'Elévation des Eaux, &c.

vacuum to the height of about thirty-two feet. About 1711 a much more effective engine was invented by Thomas Newcomen, an ironmonger of Dartmouth, assisted by John Colley, a glazier of the same place, upon Papin's principle, of making the vacuum produced by the condensation of the steam serve for allowing the descent of a piston under its own gravitation and the pressure of the atmosphere. Newcomen's, or the atmospheric engine, as it has been called, soon came to be extensively employed, especially in the mining districts, where water had often to be raised from great depths. Dr. John Theophilus Desaguliers, a clergyman of the Church of England, but of French birth and extraction, in the year 1718 improved Savery's engine (which from its cheapness has for some purposes continued in use to our own day) by substituting the injection of a small current of cold water into the receiver for the old method of dashing the water over the outside of the vessel to effect the concentration of the steam; and this same improvement—re-discovered, it is said, by himself—was also soon after applied by Newcomen to his engine. About the same time Mr. Beighton contrived to make the machine itself open and shut the cocks by which it received its alternate supplies of steam and water.

Other Discoveries and Improvements in Natural and Experimental Science.

At the head of the cultivators of experimental science in England in the latter part of the seventeenth century stands the Honourable Robert Boyle, seventh and youngest son of Richard first Earl of Cork, commonly called the Great Earl. He was born in 1627, and lived till 1691. Boyle was an unwearied observer and collector of facts, and also a voluminous speculator, in physical science; but his actual discoveries do not amount to much. He made considerable improvements on the air-pump, originally invented a few years before by Otto von Guericke of Magdeburg, and indeed it may be said to have been in his hands that it first became an instrument available for the purposes of science. The few additions which Boyle made to our knowledge of general principles, or what are called the laws of nature, were almost confined to the one department of pneumatics; he is commonly

held to have discovered or established the absorbing power of the atmosphere and the propagation of sound by the air; he proved that element to possess much more both of expansibility and of compressibility than had been previously suspected; he made some progress towards ascertaining the weight of atmospheric air; and he showed more clearly than had been done before his time its indispensableness to the sustentation both of combustion and of animal life. He may be regarded, therefore, along with Torricelli, Pascal, and Guericke, as one of the fathers of pneumatic science—in so far at least as it is concerned with the mechanical properties of the atmosphere. Boyle also ascertained many particular facts, and arrived at some general, though rather vague, conclusions in chemistry, in the course of his multifarious experiments: the practice of applying one chemical agent as a test for detecting the presence of another was first adopted by him; and he exposed the falsehood of the notion then commonly entertained, that whatever could not be destroyed or changed by fire was to be ranked among the elementary constituents of the natural world. In chemical pneumatics, however, little progress was made either by Boyle or for many years after his day. He conjectured, indeed, that only a portion of the atmosphere was employed in sustaining combustion and animal life; and his fellow-labourer Hooke divined that the element in question is the same with that contained in nitre (namely, what is now called oxygen), and that in combustion it combined with the burning body. But neither of these sagacious conclusions was yet experimentally established.

Robert Hooke, born in 1635, was, till his death in 1702, one of the most devoted cultivators of science in this age. Besides his skill and sagacity as a chemist, he had a remarkable quickness and fertility of mechanical invention, and his speculations ranged over the whole field of natural history and natural philosophy, from the minutest disclosures of the microscope to beyond the farthest sweep of the telescope. His jealous and rapacious temper, and sordid personal habits, which made him an object of general dislike in his own day, have probably somewhat stinted the acknowledgment paid to his merits both by his contemporaries and by posterity; and in fact, of numerous inventions and discoveries to which he himself laid claim, there is scarcely one to which his right has been universally admitted. It is generally allowed, however, that we are indebted to him for

the improvement of the pendulum as a measure of time, and for some valuable innovations in the construction of pendulum watches, in particular the application of a spiral spring to regulate the balance. But in his own notion Hooke was the true author of several of the discoveries which have immortalised the greatest of his contemporaries. He disputed partly the originality, partly the truth, of Newton's theory of light; and he even asserted, when the Principia came out, that there was little or nothing there announced on the force and action of gravitation that he had not himself anticipated. He had, indeed, some years before, in a paper printed in the Philosophical Transactions, sketched an hypothesis of the movements of the earth and the other planets on the assumption of the principle of universal gravitation;* but this was a very different thing from the demonstration of the system of the world by Newton on the establishment and accurate measurement of that force. Newton himself eventually admitted that his proposition of the gravitation of the planets being as the inverse square of the distance had been previously deduced from Kepler's discovery of their elliptical orbits by Hooke, as well as by Wren and Halley; but this concession is supposed to have been made rather for the sake of peace than from conviction.

The first president of the Royal Society, William Brouncker, Lord Viscount Brouncker (of the kingdom of Ireland), who was born in 1620 and died in 1684, was an able mathematician, and is known as the author of the first series invented for the quadrature of the hyperbola, and also as the first writer who noticed what are called continued fractions in arithmetic. Dr. John Wallis (b. 1616, d. 1703) is the author of many works of great learning, ingenuity, and profoundness on algebra, geometry, and mechanical philosophy. Among the practical subjects to which he devoted himself were the deciphering of secret writing, and the teaching of persons born deaf to speak. "I was informed," says Sorbiere, "that Dr. Wallis had brought a person that was born deaf and dumb to read at Oxford, by teaching him several inflections fitted to the organs of his voice, to make it articulate."† The French traveller afterwards went to Oxford, and saw and conversed with Wallis (who held the office of Savilian Professor of Geometry in the university), although he

* Phil. Trans. No. 101 (for April, 1674).

† Journey to England, p. 28.

complains that the professor and all the other learned Englishmen he met with spoke Latin, which was his medium of communication with them, with such an accent and way of pronunciation that they were very hard to be understood.* However, he adds that he was much edified, notwithstanding, by Wallis's conversation; and was mightily pleased both with the experiments he saw made by him in teaching the deaf to read, and with the model of a floor he had invented "that could bear a great weight, and make a very large hall, though it consisted only of several short pieces of timber joined together, without any mortices, nails, and pins, or any other support than what they gave one another; for the weight they bear closes them so together as if they were but one board, and the floor all of a piece." He gives a diagram of this ingenious floor; "and indeed," he continues, "I made Mr. Hobbes himself even admire it, though he is at no good terms with Dr. Wallis, and has no reason to love him."† We have already mentioned the hot war, about what might seem the least heating of all subjects, that was carried on for some years between Wallis and Hobbes. A curious account is afterwards given of Wallis's personal appearance:—"The doctor," says our traveller, "has less in him of the gallant man than Mr. Hobbes; and, if you should see him with his university cap on his head, as if he had a *porte-feuille* on, covered with black cloth, and sewed to his calot, you would be as much inclined to laugh at this diverting sight as you would be ready to entertain the excellency and civility of my friend [Hobbes] with esteem and affection." And then the coxcomb adds—"What I have said concerning Dr. Wallis is not intended in the least to derogate from the praises due to one of the greatest mathematicians in the world; and who, being yet no more than forty years of age [he was forty-seven], may advance his studies much farther, and become polite, if purified by the air of the court at London; for I must tell you, sir, that that of the university stands in need of it, and that those who are not purified otherways have naturally strong breaths that are noxious in conversation."‡ It may be doubtful whether these last ex-

* In this matter, "we do," says Spratt, in his answer, "as all our neighbours besides; we speak the ancient Latin after the same way that we pronounce our mother tongue; so the Germans do, so the Italians, so the French," p. 159.

† Journey to England, p. 39.

‡ Ibid. p. 41.

pressions are to be understood literally, or in some metaphorical sense; for it is not obvious how the air of a court, though it may polish a man's address, is actually to sweeten a bad breath. Dr. Wallis, besides his publication of the papers of Horrocks already noticed, edited several of the works of Archimedes, Ptolemy, and other ancient mathematicians; and he is also the author of a Grammar of the English tongue, written in Latin, which abounds in curious and valuable matter.

Another ingenious though somewhat fanciful mathematician of this day was Dr. John Wilkins, who was made Bishop of Chester some years after the Restoration, although during the interregnum he had married a sister of Oliver Cromwell, as Archbishop Tillotson had a niece in the reign of Charles I. Dr. Wilkins is chiefly remembered for his Discovery of a New World, published in 1638, in which he attempts to prove the practicability of a passage to the moon; and his Essay towards a Real Character, being a scheme of a universal language, which he gave to the world thirty years later. He is also the author of various theological works. Of the high mathematical merits of Dr. Isaac Barrow we have already spoken. Barrow's Lectiones Opticæ, published in 1669, and his Lectiones Geometricæ, 1670, contain his principal contributions to mathematical science. The former advanced the science of optics to the point at which it was taken up by Newton: the latter promulgated a partial anticipation of Newton's differential calculus—what is known by the name of the method of tangents, and was the simplest and most elegant form to which the principle of fluxions had been reduced previous to the system of Leibnitz. Barrow's Mathematicæ Lectiones, not published till after his death, which took place in 1677, as already mentioned, at the early age of forty-six, are also celebrated for their learning and profoundness. Another person who likewise distinguished himself in this age by his cultivation of mathematical science, although he earned his chief renown in another department, was the great architect Sir Christopher Wren.. Wren's most important paper in the Philosophical Transactions is one on the laws of the collision of bodies, read before the Royal Society in December, 1668.* It is remarkable that this subject, which had been recommended by the Society to the attention of its members, was at the same time completely elucidated by three individuals working without

* In No. 43, p. 867.

communication with each other:—by Wren in this paper; by Wallis in another, read the preceding month; and by the celebrated Huyghens (who had been elected a fellow of the Society soon after its establishment), in a third, read in January, 1669.

Newton.

A greater glory is shed over this than over any other age in the history of the higher sciences by the discoveries of Sir Isaac Newton, the most penetrating and comprehensive intellect which has ever been exerted in that field of speculation. The era of Newton extends to the year 1727, when he died at the age of eighty-five. What he did for science almost justifies the poetical comparison of his appearance among men to the first dispersion of the primeval darkness at the creation of the material world: "God said, Let Newton be, and there was light." While yet in earliest manhood, he had not only outstripped and left far behind him the ablest mathematicians and analytic investigators of the day, but had discovered, it may be said, the whole of his new system of the world, except only that he had not verified some parts of it by the requisite calculations. The year 1664, when he was only twenty-two, is assigned as the date of his discovery of the Binomial Theorem; the year 1665 as that of his invention of fluxions; the year 1666 as that in which he demonstrated the law of gravitation in regard to the movement of the planets around the sun, and was only prevented from extending it to the movement of the moon around the earth, and to that of bodies falling towards the earth, by the apparent refutation of his hypothesis when attempted to be so applied, which was occasioned by the erroneous estimate then received of the earth's diameter. He did not attempt to wrest the supposed facts so as to suit his theory; on the contrary, with a singular superiority to the seductions of mere plausibility, he said nothing of his theory to any one, and seems even to have thought no more of it for sixteen years, till, having heard by chance, at a meeting of the Royal Society in 1682, of Picard's measurement of an arc of the meridian executed three years before, he thence deduced the true length of the earth's diameter, resumed and finished his long abandoned calculation—not without such emotion as compelled him to call

in the assistance of a friend as he discerned the approaching confirmation of what he had formerly anticipated—and the following year transmitted to the Royal Society what afterwards formed the leading propositions of the Principia. That work, containing the complete exposition of the new theory of the universe, was published at London, at the expense of the Royal Society, in 1687. Meanwhile, about the year 1669, he had made his other great discovery of the non-homogeneity of light, and the differing refrangibility of the rays of which it is composed; by these fundamental facts revolutionising the whole science of optics. His Treatise on Optics, in which these discoveries and their consequences were developed, was first published in 1704; and along with it a Latin tract, entitled De Quadratura Curvarum, containing an exposition of the method of fluxions; of which, however, the Principia had already shown him to be in complete possession twenty years before, and which he had made use of in a paper written, according to his own account, in 1666, and undoubtedly communicated to Dr. Barrow, and by him to Mr. Collins, in 1669. This paper, entitled Analysis per Aequationes numero terminorum Infinitas, was published in 1711. The question of the invention of the fluxionary or differential calculus, as is well known, gave occasion to a warm and protracted dispute between the partisans of Newton and those of his illustrious continental contemporary, Leibnitz; but it is now admitted on all hands, that, whatever claim Leibnitz also may have to be accounted its independent inventor (and there can scarcely be a doubt that he has a good claim to be so accounted), the honour of the prior invention belongs to Newton.

James Gregory, and other Contemporaries of Newton.

We must dismiss some other distinguished names with a very brief mention. James Gregory, who died in 1675 at the age of only thirty-six, after having been successively Professor of Mathematics at St. Andrews and at Edinburgh, had in his short life accomplished more than any of his contemporaries except Newton. He is popularly remembered chiefly as the inventor of the first reflecting telescope; but his geometrical and analytical inventions and discoveries were also numerous, and some of them

of the highest order of merit. His nephew, David Gregory, Professor of Mathematics at Edinburgh, and afterwards Savilian Professor of Astronomy at Oxford, was also an able mathematician, and published some valuable works on geometry, optics, and astronomy. The Newtonian Theory of universal gravitation is said to have been taught by him at Edinburgh before it was introduced into any other European university. It is remarkable that when this David Gregory died, in 1708, he and two of his brothers held professorships in three British universities—himself at Oxford, James at Edinburgh, and Charles at St. Andrews. The last mentioned, too, was succeeded, upon his resignation in 1639, by his son, named David.

John Collins (b. 1624, d. 1683) is the author of several practical works and of a good many papers in the Philosophical Transactions; but he was most useful in promoting the publication of the works of others; it is said that Wallis's History of Algebra, Barrow's Optical and Geometrical Lectures, and various other publications owed their seeing the light principally to his instigation and encouragement. He also kept up an extensive epistolary intercourse with the other scientific men of the day: it was principally from the letters and papers he left behind him that the Commercium Epistolicum, or volume of correspondence on the invention of fluxions, published in 1712, was made up "Many of the discoveries in physical knowledge," says Dr. Hutton, "owe their chief improvement to him; for while he excited some to disclose every new and useful invention, he employed others in improving them. Sometimes he was peculiarly useful by showing where the defect lay in any branch of science, and pointing out the difficulties attending the inquiry; at other times explaining their advantages, and keeping up a spirit and energy for improvement. In short, Mr. Collins was like the register of all the new acquisitions made in the mathematical sciences; the magazine to which the curious had frequent recourse; which acquired him the appellation of the English Mersenne."*

Roger Cotes died in 1716, at the age of thirty-four, after having, in the estimation of his contemporaries, given promise of becoming one of the greatest mathematicians that had ever existed: Newton himself is reported to have said, "If Cotes had lived we should have known something." Cotes's mathematical papers

* Abridg. of Phil. Trans. i. 338.

were published, in 1722, under the title of Harmonia Mensurarum, by his cousin Dr. Robert Smith (author of a work on optics), and his Hydrostatical and Pneumatical Lectures in 1738 by the same editor. Of all the publications that appeared in the early stages of the fluxionary calculus, Professor Playfair conceives that none is more entitled to notice than the Harmonia Mensurarum of Cotes. In this work, he observes, a method of reducing the areas of curves, in cases not admitting of an accurate comparison with rectilinear spaces, to those of the circle and hyperbola, which Newton had exemplified in his Quadratura Curvarum, was extended by Cotes, who also "gave the rules for finding the fluents of fractional expressions, whether rational or irrational, greatly generalised and highly improved by means of a property of the circle discovered by himself, and justly reckoned among the most remarkable propositions in geometry."* Another eminent authority describes the Harmonia as "the earliest work in which decided progress was made in the application of logarithms, and of the properties of the circle, to the calculus of fluents."† Cotes superintended the printing of the second edition of Newton's Principia, published in 1713, and prefixed to it a preface which immediately acquired for him a wide scientific reputation.

The last of these early English cultivators of the new calculus whom we shall mention is Dr. Brook Taylor, a geometrician and analyst of great profoundness and originality, whose Methodus Incrementorum, published in 1715, is characterised by Playfair as having "added a new branch to the analysis of variable quantity." "A single analytical formula," Playfair adds, "in the Method of Increments has conferred a celebrity on its author which the most voluminous works have not often been able to bestow. It is known by the name of Taylor's Theorem, and expresses the value of any function of a variable quantity in terms of the successive orders of increments, whether finite or infinitely small. If any one proposition can be said to comprehend in it a whole science, it is this: for from it almost every truth and every method of the new analysis may be deduced. It is difficult to say whether the theorem does most credit to the genius of the author, or the power of the language which is capable of concentrating such a vast body of knowledge in a

* Dissertation on Progress of Math. and Phys. Science, p. 531.

† Article on Cotes, in Penny Cyclopædia, viii. 87.

single expression."* Taylor's Theorem has since its first announcement been, in the language of the late Professor Leslie, "successively modified, transformed, and extended by Maclaurin, Lagrange, and Laplace, whose names are attached to their respective formulæ."†

Establishment of the Royal Observatory.

The example and discoveries of Newton, and especially the publication of the Principia, had, before the end of the seventeenth century, given a new direction and character to scientific speculation, and even to what was generally understood by the term science, in England. The day of little more than mere virtuosoship, in which the Royal Society had taken its rise and commenced its operations, had given place to that of pure science in its highest forms and most lofty and extensive applications.

Next to the development and application of the fluxionary calculus, the field in which, as might have been expected, the impulse given by Newton produced the most brilliant results was that of astronomy. The Royal Observatory at Greenwich was founded by Charles II., for the benefit of astronomy and navigation, in 1676; and the appointment of Astronomer Royal (or Astronomical Observator, in the official style) bestowed upon John Flamsteed, then about thirty years of age, and already distinguished as a cultivator of astronomical science. Flamsteed held this office till his death in 1719; and during that space of time made and published a voluminous series of observations, from the commencement of which his late biographer Mr. Baily dates the commencement of modern astronomy. "Nor," observes another writer, to whose masterly contributions to the history of the mathematical sciences we have been repeatedly indebted in the preceding pages, "can such chronology be disputed, if we consider that we now return to Flamsteed's observations as the earliest with which it is desirable to compare those of our day, and also that Flamsteed's Catalogue is the first which attained a precision comparable to that of later times."‡ What is here

* Dissertation, p. 532.

† Dissertation on the Progress of the Math. and Phys. Sciences in the Eighteenth Century, in Encyclopædia Britannica, p. 599.

‡ Article on Flamsteed, in Penny Cyclopædia, x. 296.

alluded to is a catalogue of above 3300 stars, "whose places," as has been remarked, "were more accurate than any determined in the next fifty years, and whose selection and nomenclature have served as basis to every catalogue since that time."* A portion of this Catalogue was first published, without Flamsteed's consent, in 1712, by a committee appointed by the government, of which Newton, Wren, and Gregory were members, and under the immediate superintendence of Halley, by whose name the work, entitled Historiæ Cœlestis Libri Duo, is commonly known. Flamsteed considered himself, and apparently with good reason, to have been very ill used in this transaction;† and, having at last succeeded in recovering from the government all the copies of Halley's book that remained unsold, he committed them to the flames, with the exception of a portion of the sheets, out of which he formed part of the first volume of a new work, with the title of Historia Cœlestis Britannica, the printing of which, however (in three volumes, folio), was not completed till 1725, six years after the author's death. It was carried through the press by his widow, with the aid of his assistants Mr. Crosthwait and Mr. Abraham Sharp, the latter of whom had attained great distinction as an accurate observer. This work is characterised by the writer of the article on Flamsteed in the Penny Cyclopædia as occupying the same place in practical astronomy which the Principia of Newton holds in the theoretical part. It was to Flamsteed that Newton (who afterwards quarrelled with his old friend, and abused him in no measured terms, on the misunderstanding that arose about the first publication of his catalogue) was indebted for all the observations of the moon which he made use of in the illustration and verification of his lunar theory. "The first edition of Newton's Principia," to quote again the publication just referred to, "had appeared shortly before Flamsteed had supplied himself with his best instruments; and at Newton's request many of Flamsteed's observations of the moon, reduced as well as was then practicable, were communicated to him to aid in perfecting the theory deduced from the principle of universal gravitation. The time at which these observations were made was in fact a most critical one—when the most accu-

* Article on Greenwich Observatory, in Penny Cyclopædia, xi. 441.

† See the particulars, as for the first time brought to light by Mr. Francis Baily, in his new edition of The British Catalogue of Stars, corrected and enlarged, with an account of the life of Flamsteed prefixed. Lond. 1835.

rate observations that had been made were needed for the support of the most extensive philosophical theory that man had invented."*

Medical Science and Natural History.

In the English medical science of the latter part of the seventeenth century the most distinguished name is that of Dr. Thomas Sydenham (b. 1624, d. 1689). Discarding mere theory, Sydenham applied himself to the careful observation of nature and facts; and his practice and writings are considered as marking an era in the history of the healing art. After his time little innovation was made among British practitioners, either in the treatment or doctrine of diseases, till the era of Cullen and Brown in the middle of the succeeding century. Anatomical science from the middle of the seventeenth to the middle of the eighteenth century was principally advanced by Malpighi, Steno, Ruysch, Duverney, Morgagni, Albinus, Haller, and other Italian, French, and German physicians; but some new facts were also contributed by Humphrey Ridley, the author of a work on the Brain, published in 1695; by William Cowper, whose Anatomical Tables, published in 1698, however, are asserted to have been stolen from the Dutch anatomist Bidloo; by the eldest Alexander Monro, the author of the Osteology, first published in 1726, and the founder of the medical school of Edinburgh: and by the celebrated William Cheselden, author of the Osteography, published in 1733, and of various other works, and the most expert English operator of his day. To these names ought to be added that of Stephen Hales, whose Vegetable Statics, published in 1727, and Haemastatics, published in 1733, carried both vegetable and animal physiology considerably farther than any preceding work either English or foreign. Something was also done in the new sciences (if they were yet entitled to be so called) of zoology and comparative anatomy, by Nehemiah Grew, Edward Tyson, Samuel Collins, and other early members of the Royal Society. Grew is likewise one of the fathers of modern botany; but that science was indebted for altogether a new form to the famous John Ray,

* Article on Greenwich Observatory, in Penny Cyclopædia, xi. 441.

whose various works were published between 1670 and his death in 1705. "Botany," says a late writer, in noticing the merits of Ray, "he found was fast settling back into the chaos of the middle ages, partly beneath the weight of undigested materials, but more from the want of some fixed principles by which the knowledge of the day should be methodized. Profiting by the discoveries of Grew and the other vegetable anatomists, to which he added a great store of original observations, he, in his Historia Plantarum, the first volume of which appeared in 1686, embodied in one connected series all the facts that had been collected concerning the structure and functions of plants: to these he added an exposition of what he considered the philosophy of classification, as indicated partly by human reason, and partly by experience; and from the whole he deduced a classification which is unquestionably the basis of that which, under the name of the system of Jussieu, is everywhere recognized at the present day."* Ray's views, however, were encountered even in his own day by the artificial system of the French botanist Tournefort; and before the middle of the next century the science was again revolutionised by the genius of the great Linnæus. The Botanical, or Physic Garden, as it was called, at Oxford, we may here mention, had been founded and endowed by Henry Danvers, Earl of Danby, in 1632. Ornithology and ichthyology may almost be said to owe their beginning, at least in this country, to Ray's friend, Francis Willughby. Willughby died, at the age of thirty-seven, in 1672, but his works on these subjects—his Ornithologiæ Libri Tres, and his Historia Piscium,—were not published till some years after, under the superintendence of Ray; indeed, of the latter, which did not appear till 1686, Ray was half the author as well as the editor. A similar service was performed to conchology by the magnificent Historia Conchyliorum of Dr. Martin Lister, the first part of which appeared in 1685, the fifth and last in 1693. Finally, in geology, while some progress was made in the collecting and even in the arranging of facts by Ray, Dr. John Woodward, and others, and a few elementary general principles or natural laws of the science were beginning to be perceived, a host of speculators, headed by the eloquent Thomas Burnet and the eccentric William Whiston, both men of genius and learning, but of more fancy than either judgment or knowledge of the subjects which in this instance

* Penny Cyclopædia, v. 248.

they undertook to discuss, produced in the last years of the seventeenth and the first of the eighteenth century many theories of the earth, which explained not only its structure, but its origin and its destiny—in other words, its whole history, past, present, and future—as well as such a task could be accomplished by the imagination working without materials, and without the aid of any other faculty.

ENGLISH LITERATURE SINCE THE REVOLUTION OF 1688.

First Effects of the Revolution on our Literature.

The Revolution, brought on by some of the same causes that had given birth to the Commonwealth, and restoring something of the same spirit and condition of things, came like another nightfall upon our higher literature, putting out the light of poetry in the land still more effectually than had even that previous triumph of the popular principle. Up to this date English literature had grown and flourished chiefly in the sunshine of court protection and favour; the public appreciation and sympathy were not yet sufficiently extended to afford it the necessary warmth and shelter. Its spirit, consequently, and affections were in the main courtly; it drooped and withered when the encouragement of the court was withdrawn, from the deprivation both of its customary support and sustenance and of its chief inspiration. And, if the decay of this kind of light at the Revolution was, as we have said, still more complete than that which followed upon the setting up of the Commonwealth, the difference seems to have been mainly owing to there having been less of it to extinguish at the one epoch than at the other. At the Restoration the impulse given by the great poets of the age of Elizabeth and James was yet operating, without having been interrupted and weakened by any foreign influence, upon the language and the national mind. Doubtless, too, whatever may be thought of the literary tendencies of puritanism and republicanism when they had got into the ascendant, the nurture both for head and heart furnished by the ten years of high deeds, and higher hopes and speculations, that ushered in the Commonwealth, must have been of a far other kind than any that was to be got out of the thirty years, or thereby, of laxity, frivolity, denationalization, and in-

sincerity of all sorts, down the comparatively smooth stream of which men slid, without effort and without thought, to the Revolution. No wonder that some powerful minds were trained by the former, and almost none by the latter.

Surviving Writers of the preceding Period.

With the exception of some two or three names, none of them of the highest class, to be presently mentioned, almost the only writers that shed any lustre on the first reign after the Revolution are those of a few of the survivors of the preceding era. Dryden, fallen on what to him were evil days and evil tongues, and forced in his old age to write for bread with less rest for his wearied head and hand than they had ever had before, now produced some of his most laborious and also some of his most happily executed works: his translation of Virgil, among others, his Fables, and his Alexander's Feast. Lee, the dramatic poet, discharged from Bedlam, finished two more tragedies, his Princess of Cleve and his Massacre of Paris, before, "returning one night from the Bear and Harrow, in Butcher-Row, through Clare Market, to his lodgings in Duke Street, overladen with wine, he fell down on the ground as some say, according to others on a bulk, and was killed or stifled in the snow," early in the year 1692.* The comic Etheredge also outlived the deposition of his patron James II., but is not known to have written anything after that event; he followed James to France, and is reported to have died characteristically at Ratisbon a year or two after: "having treated some company with a liberal entertainment at his house there, where he had taken his glass too freely, and, being, through his great complaisance, too forward in waiting on his guests at their departure, flushed as he was, he tumbled down stairs and broke his neck, and so fell a martyr to jollity and civility."† Wycherley, who at the date of the Revolution was

* MS. note by Oldys, quoted in Biog. Dram. It was not known whether his death happened in this or the preceding year, till Mr. Peter Cunningham ascertained from the Burial Register that he was buried in the churchyard of St. Clement Danes on the 6th of April, 1692.—See Campbell's Specimens of the British Poets, edit. of 1844, p. 301.

† Biog. Dram., on authority of Biog. Brit., the writer in which says that he received this account from John Locker, Esq.

under fifty, lived to become a correspondent of Pope, and even saw out the reign of Anne; but he produced nothing in that of William, although he published a volume of poems in 1704, and left some other trifles behind him, which were printed long afterwards by Theobald. Southerne, indeed, who survived till 1746, continued to write and publish till within twenty years of his death; his two best dramas—his Fatal Marriage and his Oroonoko—were both produced in the reign of William. Southerne, though not without considerable pathetic power, was fortunate in a genius on the whole not above the appreciation of the unpoetical age he lived in: "Dryden once took occasion to ask him how much he got by one of his plays; to which he answered that he was really ashamed to inform him. But, Mr. Dryden being a little importunate to know, he plainly told him that by his last play he cleared seven hundred pounds, which appeared astonishing to Dryden, as he himself had never been able to acquire more than one hundred by his most successful pieces."* Southerne, who, whatever estimate may be formed of his poetry, was not, we may gather from this anecdote, without some conscience and modesty, had worse writers than himself to keep him in countenance by their preposterous prosperity, in this lucky time for mediocrity and dulness. Shadwell was King William's first poet-laureate, and Nahum Tate his next. Tate, indeed, and his friend Dr. Nicholas Brady, were among the most flourishing authors and greatest public favourites of this reign: it was now that they perpetrated in concert their version, or perversion, of the Psalms, with which we are still afflicted. Brady also published a play, and, at a later date, some volumes of sermons and a translation of the Æneid, which, fortunately, not having been imposed or recommended by authority, are all among the most forgotten of books. Elkanah Settle, too, was provided for as city poet.

Among writers of another class, perhaps the most eminent who, having been distinguished before the Revolution, survived and continued to write after that event, was Sir William Temple. His Miscellanies, by which he is principally known, though partly composed before, were not published till then. John Evelyn, who, however, although a very miscellaneous as well as voluminous writer, has hardly left any work that is held in esteem for either style or thought, or for anything save what it may contain of positive information or mere matter of fact, also pub-

* Biog. Dram.

lished one or two books in the reign of William, which he saw to an end; for he died at the age of eighty-five, in 1706. Bishop Stillingfleet, who had been known as an author since before the Restoration, for his Irenicum appeared in 1659, when he was only in his twenty-fourth year, and who had kept the press in employment by a rapid succession of publications during the next five-and-twenty years, resumed his pen after the Revolution, which raised him to the bench, to engage in a controversy with Locke about some of the principles of his famous essay; but, whether it was that years had abated his powers, or that he had a worse cause to defend, or merely that the public taste was changed, he gained much less applause for his dialectic skill on this than on most former occasions. Stillingfleet lived to the year 1699. Two other eminent theological writers of this reign, Cumberland and Bull, who both eventually became bishops, had also first acquired distinction in the preceding period. Cumberland's principal work is his Latin treatise De Legibus Naturæ, an attack of considerable acuteness on the philosophy of Hobbes; Bull, who is also the author of some sermons in English, is most celebrated for his Harmonia Apostolica, directed against Calvinism, 1669; his Defensio Fidei Nicenæ, 1685; and his Judicium Ecclesiæ Catholicæ, 1694; all in Latin.

John Norris, also, one of the last of the school of English Platonists, which may be considered as having been founded in the latter part of the seventeenth century by Cudworth and Henry More, had, we believe, become known as a writer some years before the Revolution; but the greater number of his publications first appeared in the reign of William, and he may be reckoned one of the best writers properly or principally belonging to that reign. Yet he is not for a moment to be compared for learning, compass of thought, or power and skill of expression, to either Cudworth or More. Norris's principal work is his Essay on the Ideal World, published in two parts in 1701 and 1702. He is also the author of a volume of religious poetry, of rather a feeble character, which has been often reprinted. Bishop Spratt, though a clergyman, and a writer both of prose and verse, cannot be called a divine; he had in earlier life the reputation of being the finest writer of the day, but, although he lived till very nearly the end of the reign of Anne, he published nothing, we believe, after the Revolution, nor indeed for a good many years before it. His style, which was so much admired in his own age, is a

Frenchified English, with an air of ease and occasionally of vivacity, but without any true grace or expressiveness.

Good old Richard Baxter, who had been filling the world with books for half a century, just lived to see the Revolution. He died, at the age of seventy-six, in the beginning of December, 1691. And in the end of the same month died, a considerably younger man, Robert Boyle, another of the most voluminous writers of the preceding period, and famous also for his services in the cause of religion, as well as of science. In the preceding May, at a still less advanced age, had died the most eminent Scotch writer of the period between the Restoration and the Revolution, Sir George Mackenzie, lord-advocate under both Charles II. and his successor; the author of the Institution of the Laws of Scotland, and many other professional, historical, and antiquarian works, but the master also of a flowing pen in moral speculation, the belles lettres, and even in the department of fancy and fiction—as may be gathered from the titles of his Aretina, or the Serious Romance, 1660; Religio Stoici, or the Virtuoso, 1663; Solitude preferred to Public Employment, 1665; Moral Gallantry, 1667. Mackenzie may be regarded as the first successor of his countryman Drummond of Hawthornden in the cultivation of an English style; he was the correspondent of Dryden and other distinguished English writers of his day; but he has no pretensions of his own to any high rank either for the graces of his expression or the value of his matter. Whatever may have been his professional learning, too, his historical disquisitions are as jejune and uncritical as his attempts at fine writing are, with all their elaboration, at once pedantic and clownish. He has nothing either of the poetry or the elegance of Drummond.

Bishop Burnet.

The most active and conspicuous undoubtedly of the prose writers who, having acquired distinction in the preceding period, continued to prosecute the business of authorship after the Revolution, was the celebrated Dr. Gilbert Burnet, now Bishop of Salisbury. Of 145 distinct publications (many of them, however, only single sermons and other short pamphlets), which are enu-

merated as having proceeded from his incessant pen between 1669 and his death, at the age of seventy-two, in 1715 (including, indeed, his History of his Own Time, and his Thoughts on Education, which did not appear till after his death), we find that 71, namely 21 historical works and 50 sermons and tracts, belong to the period before the Revolution; 36, namely 5 historical works and 31 sermons and tracts, to the reign of William; and the remaining 38, namely one historical work and 37 pamphlets, to a later date.* Many of what we have called historical works, however, are mere pamphlets: in fact Burnet's literary performances of any considerable extent are only three in number:—his Memoirs of James and William, Dukes of Hamilton, published, in one volume folio, in 1676; his History of the Reformation of the Church of England, 3 volumes folio, 1679, 1681, and 1714; and his History of his Own Time, in two volumes folio, published after his death in 1723 and 1734. There is enough of literary labour, as well as of historical value, in these works to preserve to the author a very honourable name; each of them contains much matter now nowhere else to be found, and they must always continue to rank among the original sources of our national history, both ecclesiastical and civil. In regard to their execution, too, it must be admitted that the style is at least straightforward and unaffected, and generally as unambiguous as it is unambitious; the facts are clearly enough arranged; and the story is told not only intelligibly, but for the most part in rather a lively and interesting way. On the other hand, to any high station as a writer Burnet can make no claim; he is an industrious collector of intelligence, and a loquacious and moderately lively gossip; but of eloquence, or grace, or refinement of any sort, he is as destitute as he is (and that is altogether) of imagination, and wit, and humour, and subtlety, and depth and weight of thought, and whatever other qualities give anything either of life or lustre to what a man utters out of his own head or heart. We read him for the sake of his facts only; he troubles us with but few reflections, but of that no reader will complain. He does not see far into anything, nor indeed, properly speaking, into it at all; for that matter he is little more, to adopt a modern term, than a penny-a-liner on a large scale, and best performs his

* We have for convenience of classification, reckoned each of the three volumes of the History of the Reformation a distinct publication, as it really was.

task when he does not attempt to be anything else. Nor is he a neat-handed workman even of that class; in his History of his Own Time, in particular, his style, with no strength, or flavour, or natural charm of any kind, to redeem its rudeness, is the most slovenly undress in which a writer ever wrapt up what he had to communicate to the public. Its only merit, as we have observed, is that it is without any air of pretension, and that it is evidently as extemporaneous and careless as it is unelevated, shapeless, and ungrammatical. Among the most important and best known of Burnet's other works are, that entitled Some Passages of the Life and Death of the Right Honourable John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, 1680; his Life of Bishop Bedel, 1685; his Travels through France, Italy, Germany, and Switzerland, 1685; and his Exposition of the Thirty-Nine Articles, 1699. The first mentioned of these is the best written of all his works.

THOMAS BURNET.

In the same year with Bishop Burnet, but at a more advanced age, died Dr. Thomas Burnet, the learned and eloquent author of the Telluris Sacra Theoria, first published in Latin in 1680, and afterwards translated into English by the author; of the Archæologia Philosophica, published in 1692; and of two or three other treatises, also in Latin, which did not appear till after his death. Burnet's system of geology has no scientific value whatever; indeed, it must be considered as a mere romance, although, from the earnestness of the author's manner and his constant citation of texts of Scripture in support of his positions, as well as from more than one answer which he afterwards published to the attacks made upon his book, it is evident that he by no means intended it to be so received. But, with his genius and imagination and consummate scholarship, he is a very different species of writer from his garrulous and mitred namesake: his English style is singularly flowing and harmonious, as well as perspicuous and animated, and rises on fit occasions to much majesty and even splendour. As a specimen, we will transcribe a portion of the concluding Chapter of the Third Book of the Sacred Theory of the Earth, entitled An Imperfect Description of the Coming of our Saviour, and of the World on Fire:—

Certainly there is nothing in the whole course of nature, or of human affairs, so great and so extraordinary as the two last scenes of them, the Coming of our Saviour, and the Burning of the World. If we could draw in our minds the pictures of these in true and lively colours, we should scarce be able to attend any thing else, or ever divert our imagination from these two objects: for what can more affect us than the greatest glory that ever was visible upon earth, and at the same time the greatest terror;—a God descending at the head of an array of angels, and a burning world under his feet? . . . . . .

As to the face of nature just before the coming of our Saviour, that may be best collected from the signs of his coming mentioned in the precedent chapter. Those, all meeting together, help to prepare and make ready a theatre fit for an angry God to come down upon. The countenance of the heavens will be dark and gloomy; and a veil drawn over the face of the sun. The earth in a disposition every where to break into open flames. The tops of the mountains smoking; the rivers dry; earthquakes in several places; the sea sunk and retired into its deepest channel, and roaring as against some mighty storm. These things will make the day dead and melancholy; but the night scenes will have more of horror in them, when the blazing stars appear, like so many furies with their lighted torches, threatening to set all on fire. For I do not doubt but the comets will bear a part in this tragedy, and have something extraordinary in them at that time, either as to number or bigness, or nearness to the earth. Besides, the air will be full of flaming meteors, of unusual forms and magnitudes; balls of fire rolling in the sky, and pointed lightnings darted against the earth, mixed with claps of thunder and unusual noises from the clouds. The moon and the stars will be confused and irregular, both in their light and motions; as if the whole frame of the heavens was out of order, and all the laws of nature were broken or expired.

When all things are in this languishing or dying posture, and the inhabitants of the earth under the fears of their last end, the heavens will open on a sudden and the glory of God will appear. A glory surpassing the sun in its greatest radiancy; which though we cannot describe, we may suppose it will bear some resemblance or proportion with those representations that are made in Scripture of God upon his throne. This wonder in the heavens, whatsoever its form may be, will presently attract the eyes of all the Christian world. Nothing can more affect than an object so unusual and so illustrious, and that probably brings along with it their last destiny, and will put a period to all human affairs. . . . . .

As it is not possible for us to express or conceive the dread and majesty of his appearance, so neither can we, on the other hand, express the passions and consternation of the people that behold it. These things exceed the measures of human affairs, and of human thoughts: we have neither words nor comparisons to make them known by. The greatest pomp and magnificence of the Emperors of the East, in their armies, in their triumphs, in their inaugurations, is but the sport and entertainment of children, if compared with this solemnity. When God condescends to

an external-glory, with a visible train and equipage; when, from all the provinces of his vast and boundless empire, he summons his nobles, as I may so say—the several orders of angels and archangels—to attend his person, though we cannot tell the form or manner of his appearance, we know there is nothing in our experience, or in the whole history of this world, that can be a just representation of the least part of it. No armies so numerous as the host of Heaven; and, instead of the wild noises of the rabble, which makes a great part of our worldly state, this blessed company will breathe their hallelujahs into the open air, and repeated acclamations of salvation to God, which sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb. . . . .

Imagine all Nature now standing in a silent expectation to receive its last doom; the tutelary and destroying angels to have their instructions; every thing to be ready for the fatal hour; and then, after a little silence, all the host of heaven to raise their voice, and sing aloud: Let God arise; let his enemies be scattered; as smoke is driven away, so drive them away; As wax melteth before the fire, so let the wicked perish at the presence of God. And upon this, as upon a signal given, all the sublunary world breaks into flames, and all the treasures of fire are opened in heaven and in earth.

Thus the conflagration begins. If one should now go about to represent the world on fire, with all the confusions that necessarily must be in nature and in mankind upon that occasion, it would seem to most men a romantic scene. Yet we are sure there must be such a scene. The heavens will pass away with a noise, and the elements will melt with fervent heat, and all the works of the earth will be burnt up; and these things cannot come to pass without the greatest disorders imaginable, both in the minds of man and in external nature, and the saddest spectacles that eye can behold. We think it a great matter to see a single person burnt alive; here are millions shrieking in the flames at once. It is frightful to us to look upon a great city in flames, and to see the distractions and misery of the people; here is an universal fire through all the cities of the earth, and an universal massacre of their inhabitants. Whatsoever the prophets foretold of the desolations of Judea, Jerusalem, or Babylon, in the highest strains, is more than literally accomplished in this last and general calamity; and those only that are spectators of it can make its history.

The disorders in nature and the inanimate world will be no less, nor less strange and unaccountable, than those in mankind. Every element and every region, so far as the bounds of this fire extend, will be in a tumult and a fury, and the whole habitable world running into confusion. A world is sooner destroyed than made; and nature relapses hastily into that chaos state out of which she came by slow and leisurely motions: as an army advances into the field by just and regular marches; but, when it is broken and routed, it flies with precipitation, and one cannot describe its posture. Fire is a barbarous enemy; it gives no mercy; there is nothing but fury and rage, and ruin and destruction, wheresoever it prevails. A storm, or hurricane, though it be but the

force of air, makes a strange havoc where it comes; but devouring flames, or exhalations set on fire, have still a far greater violence, and carry more terror along with them. Thunder and earthquakes are the sons of fire; and we know nothing in all nature more impetuous or more irresistibly destructive than these two. And, accordingly, in this last war of the elements, we may be sure they will bear their parts, and do great execution in the several regions of the world. Earthquakes and subterraneous eruptions will tear the body and bowels of the earth; and thunders and convulsive motions of the air rend the skies. The waters of the sea will boil and struggle with streams of sulphur that run into them; which will make them fume, and smoke, and roar, beyond all storms and tempests; and these noises of the sea will be answered again from the land by falling rocks and mountains. This is a small part of the disorders of that day. . . . . .

But if we suppose the storm over, and that the fire hath got an entire victory over all other bodies, and hath subdued every thing to itself, the conflagration will end in a deluge of fire, or in a sea of fire, covering the whole globe of the earth; for, when the exterior region of the earth is melted into a fluor, like molten glass or running metal, it will, according to the nature of other fluids, fill all vacuities and depressions, and fall into a regular surface, at an equal distance everywhere from its centre. This sea of fire, like the first abyss, will cover the face of the whole earth, make a kind of second chaos, and leave a capacity for another world to rise from it. But that is not our present business. Let us only, if you please, to take leave of this subject, reflect, upon this occasion, on the vanity and transient glory of all this habitable world; how, by the force of one element breaking loose upon the rest, all the varieties of nature, all the works of art, all the labours of men, are reduced to nothing; all that we admired and adored before as great and magnificent is obliterated or banished; and another form and face of things, plain, simple, and every where the same, overspreads the whole earth. Where are now the great empires of the world, and their great imperial cities? Their pillars, trophies, and monuments of glory? Show me where they stood; read the inscription; tell me the victor's name. What remains, what impressions, what difference or distinction, do you see in this mass of fire? Rome itself, eternal Rome, the great city, the Empress of the world, whose domination and superstition, ancient and modern, make a great part of the history of this earth, what is become of her now? She laid her foundations deep, and her palaces were strong and sumptuous; she glorified herself and lived deliciously, and said in her heart, I sit a queen, and shall see no sorrow. But her hour is come, she is wiped away from the face of the earth, and buried in perpetual oblivion. But it is not cities only, and works of men's hands, but the everlasting hills and mountains and rocks of the earth are melted as wax before the sun; and their place is nowhere found. Here stood the Alps, a prodigious range of stone, the load of the earth, that covered many countries, and reached their arms from the ocean to the Black Sea: this huge mass of stone is softened and dissolved, as a

tender cloud into rain. Here stood the African mountains, and Atlas with his top above the clouds. There was frozen Caucasus, and Taurus, and Imaus, and the mountains of Asia. And yonder, towards the north, stood the Riphæan Hills, clothed in ice and snow. All these are vanished, dropt away as the snow upon their heads, and swallowed up in a red sea of fire. Great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of Saints! Hallelujah.

Other Theological Writers:—Tillotson; South.

Another name that may be here mentioned is that of Archbishop Tillotson, who was a very popular preacher among the Presbyterians before the Restoration, and began publishing sermons so early as in the year 1661, while he still belonged to that sect. He died in 1694, in his sixty-fourth year. Tillotson's Sermons, still familiarly known by reputation, long continued to be the most generally esteemed collection of such compositions in the language; but are probably now very little read. They are substantial performances, such as make the reader feel, when he has got through one of them, that he has accomplished something of a feat; and, being withal as free from pedantry and every other kind of eccentricity or extravagance as from flimsiness, and exceedingly sober in their strain of doctrine, with a certain blunt cordiality in the expression and manner, they were in all respects very happily addressed to the ordinary peculiarities of the national mind and character. But, having once fallen into neglect, Tillotson's writings have no qualities that will ever revive attention to them. There is much more of a true vitality in the sermons of Dr. Robert South, whose career of authorship commenced in the time of the Protectorate, though his life was extended till after the accession of George I. He died in 1716, at the age of eighty-three. South's sermons, the first of which dates even before the earliest of Tillotson's, and the last after Tillotson's latest, are very well characterised by Mr. Hallam:—"They were," he observes, "much celebrated at the time, and retain a portion of their renown. This is by no means surprising. South had great qualifications for that popularity which attends the pulpit, and his manner was at that time original. Not diffuse, nor learned, nor formal in argument like Barrow, with a more natural structure of sentences, a more pointed though

by no means a more fair and satisfactory turn of reasoning, with a style clear and English, free from all pedantry, but abounding with those colloquial novelties of idiom, which, though now become vulgar and offensive, the age of Charles II. affected, sparing no personal or temporary sarcasm, but, if he seems for a moment to tread on the verge of buffoonery, recovering himself by some stroke of vigorous sense and language: such was the worthy Dr. South, whom the courtiers delighted to hear. His sermons want all that is called unction, and sometimes even earnestness; but there is a masculine spirit about them, which, combined with their peculiar characteristics, would naturally fill the churches where he might be heard."* Both South and Tillotson are considered to belong as divines to the Arminian, or, as it was then commonly called, the Latitudinarian school—as well as Cudworth, More, and Stillingfleet.

A few paragraphs from one of his discourses against long and extempore prayers, on *Ecclesiastes* v. 2, "Be not rash with thy mouth," etc., will exemplify his lively and pregnant style of preaching:—

And, thus having shown how the Almighty utters himself when he speaks, and that upon the greatest occasions, let us now descend from heaven to earth, from God to man, and show that it is no presumption for us to conform our words, as well as our actions, to the supreme pattern; and, according to our poor measures, to imitate the wisdom that we adore. And for this, has it not been noted by the best observers and the ablest judges, both of things and persons, that the wisdom of any people or nation has been most seen in the proverbs and short sayings commonly received amongst them? And what is a proverb, but the experience and observation of several ages, gathered and summed up into one expression? The Scripture vouches Solomon for the wisest of men; and they are his Proverbs that prove him so. The seven wise men of Greece, so famous for their wisdom all the world over, acquired all that fame, each of them by a single sentence consisting of two or three words; and γνῶθι σεαυτὸν (Know thyself) still lives and flourishes in the mouths of all, while many vast volumes are extinct, and sunk into dust and utter oblivion. And then, for books: we shall generally find that the most excellent, in any art or science, have been still the smallest and most compendious: and this not without ground; for it is an argument that the author was a master of what he wrote, and had a clear notion and a full comprehension of the subject before him. For the reason of things lies in a little compass, if the mind could at any time be so happy as to light upon it. Most of

* Lit. of Europe, iv. 56.

the writings and discourses in the world are but illustration and rhetoric, which signifies as much as nothing to a mind eager in pursuit after the causes and philosophical truth of things. It is the work of fancy to enlarge, but of judgment to shorten and contract; and therefore this must needs be as far above the other as judgment is a greater and a nobler faculty than fancy or imagination. All philosophy is reduced to a few principles, and those principles comprised in a few propositions. And, as the whole structure of speculation rests upon three or four axioms or maxims, so that of practice also bears upon a very small number of rules. And surely there was never yet any rule or maxim that filled a volume, or took up a week's time to be got by heart. No, these are the *apices rerum*, the tops and sums, the very spirit and life of things extracted and abridged; just as all the lines drawn from the vastest circumference do at length meet and unite in the smallest of things, a point: and it is but a very little piece of wood with which a true artist will measure all the timber in the world. The truth is, there could be no such thing as art or science could not the mind of man gather the general natures of things out of the numberless heap of particulars, and then bind them up into such short aphorisms or propositions, that so they may be made portable to the memory, and thereby become ready or at hand for the judgment to apply and make use of, as there shall be occasion.

In fine, brevity and succinctness of speech is that which, in philosophy or speculation, we call *maxim*, and first principle; in the counsels and resolves of practical wisdom, and the deep mysteries of religion, *oracle;* and lastly, in matters of wit, and the finenesses of imagination, *epigram*. All of them, severally and in their kinds, the greatest and the noblest things that the mind of man can show the force and dexterity of its faculties in.

And now, if this be the highest excellency and perfection of speech in all other things, can we assign any true, solid reason why it should not be likewise in prayer? Nay, is there not rather the clearest reason imaginable why it should be much more so; since most of the forementioned things are but addresses to an human understanding, which may need as many words as may fill a volume to make it understand the truth of one line? Whereas prayer is an address to that Eternal Mind, which, as we have shown before, such as rationally invocate pretend not to inform. Nevertheless, since the nature of man is such that, while we are yet in the body, our reverence and worship of God must of necessity proceed in some analogy to the reverence that we show to the grandees of this world, we will here see what the judgment of all wise men is concerning fewness of words when we appear as suppliants before our earthy superiors; and we shall find that they generally allow it to import these three things: 1, Modesty; 2, Discretion; and 3, Height of respect to the person addressed to. And first, for modesty. Modesty is a kind of shame or bashfulness, proceeding from the sense a man has of his own defects, compared with the perfections of him whom he comes before. And that which is modesty towards man is worship and devotion towards God. It is a virtue that

makes a man unwilling to be seen, and fearful to be heard; and yet, for that very cause, never fails to make him both seen with favour and heard with attention. It loves not many words, nor indeed needs them. For modesty, addressing to any one of a generous worth and honour, is sure to have that man's honour for its advocate and his generosity for its intercessor. And how, then, is it possible for such a virtue to run out into words? Loquacity storms the ear, but modesty takes the heart; that is troublesome, this gentle but irresistible. Much speaking is always the effect of confidence; and confidence still presupposes, and springs from, the persuasion that a man has of his own worth: both of them, certainly, very unfit qualifications for a petitioner.

Secondly. The second thing that naturally shows itself in paucity of words is discretion; and particularly that prime and eminent part of it that consists in a care of offending, which Solomon assures us that in much speaking it is hardly possible for us to avoid. In Prov. x. 19, *In the multitude of words*, says he, *there wanteth not sin*. It requires no ordinary skill for a man to make his tongue run by rule, and at the same time to give it both its lesson and its liberty too. For seldom or never is there much spoke, but something or other had better been not spoke, there being nothing that the mind of man is so apt to kindle and take distaste at as at words; and, therefore, whensoever any one comes to prefer a suit to another, no doubt the fewer of them the better, since, where so very little is said, it is sure to be either candidly accepted, or, which is next, easily excused; but at the same time to petition and to provoke too is certainly very preposterous.

Thirdly. The third thing that brevity of speech commends itself by in all petitioning addresses is, a peculiar respect to the person addressed to; for whosoever petitions his superior in such a manner does, by his very so doing, confess him better able to understand, than he himself can be to express, his own case. He owns him as a patron of a preventing judgment and goodness, and, upon that account, able not only to answer but also to anticipate his requests. For, according to the most natural interpretation of things, this is to ascribe to him a sagacity so quick and piercing that it were presumption to inform, and a benignity so great that it were needless to importune, him. And can there be a greater and more winning deference to a superior than to treat him under such a character? Or can anything be imagined so naturally fit and efficacious, both to enforce the petition and to endear the petitioner? A short petition to a great man is not only a suit to him for his favour, but also a panegyric upon his parts.

Here we have, if not much subtlety, depth, or largeness of view, what is better fitted to win acceptance with the common taste, and especially to prove effective in spoken eloquence, pith and point, and a vein of reasoning or remark certainly not commonplace, yet at the same time approving itself, so far as it goes, to every man's experience or consciousness, and alarming no

prejudices by any tincture either of extravagance or novelty. It is a striking without being in any respect a startling style, whether we regard the thought or the expression; a manner of disquisition which never goes mining far underground for hidden treasure, yet stirs the surface of the soil so as effectually to bring out whatever fertility may be there resident. There is no passion or poetry in South's eloquence; its chief seasoning rather partakes of the nature of wit. Many smart sayings, having that peculiar species of truth in them which belongs to a witticism, might be gathered from his writings; and some current *bons mots* may probably be traced to him. The sarcastic definition, for instance, which has been given of gratitude, that it is a sense of obligation for favours expected, seems to be originally his. We are told by the author of the Memoirs of his Life prefixed to his Sermons, that, when Dr. Owen, the puritanical vice-chancellor, in the time of the Commonwealth, threatened to expel South, then an undergraduate, from Cambridge, on his being caught performing worship according to the Book of Common Prayer, remarking that "he could do no less, in gratitude to his highness the Protector, and his other great friends, who had thought him worthy of the dignities he then stood possessed of," the future champion of the restored Church of England replied, "Gratitude among friends is like credit amongst tradesmen; it keeps business up, and maintains the correspondence: and we pay, not so much out of a principle that we ought to discharge our debts, as to secure ourselves a place to be trusted another time." The buffoonery, or something like it, occasionally to be found in his sermons is principally directed against the sectaries; for South, although not given to take up with any creed or system on the mere ground of authority, was, as we have just said, a strict and strenuous adherent of the Establishment, and had convinced himself that there was no good to be found either to the right or the left of the Thirty-nine Articles, either in Romanism on the one hand or Protestant dissent on the other. It is true that when at college, in 1655, he had gone so far as to contribute a copy of Latin verses to the volume published by the university in congratulation of Cromwell on the peace conquered by him that year from the Dutch; and this circumstance considerably annoys his orthodox and loyal biographer. Upon the said poem, it is remarked, "some people have made invidious reflections, as if contrary to the sentiments he afterwards espoused; but these are to

be told that such exercises are usually imposed by the governors of colleges upon bachelors of arts and undergraduates: I shall forbear to be particular in his, as being a forced compliment to the usurper. Not but even those discover a certain unwillingness to act in favour of that monster, whom even the inimitable Earl of Clarendon, in his History of the Grand Rebellion, distinguishes by the name and title of a Glorious Villain." As a further sample of the principles and temper of this biographer, we may just notice that a little lower down, in mentioning the learned Dr. John Owen, he designates him, "this man (if he deserves the name of one)," and describes all his party as "creatures divested of all qualities that point towards the least symptoms of humanity." In South himself the feeling of aversion to the sectarianism and republicanism that had for the present been shuffled out of sight, or out of the way, never took this bitter tone. His way of viewing the matter may be exemplified by a famous passage from a sermon which he preached, as one of the chaplains in ordinary, before Charles II. in 1681:—"Who that had looked upon Agathocles, first handling the clay, and making pots under his father, and afterwards turning robber, could have thought that, from such a condition, he should come to be king of Sicily? Who that had seen Masaniello, a poor fisherman, with his red cap and his angle, would have reckoned it possible to see such a pitiful thing, within a week after, shining in his cloth of gold, and with a word or a nod absolutely commanding the whole city of Naples? And who that had beheld such a bankrupt, beggarly fellow as Cromwell, first entering the Parliament House, with a threadbare, torn cloak, greasy hat (perhaps neither of them paid for), could have suspected that, in the space of so few years, he should, by the murder of one king and the banishment of another, ascend the throne?" There is contempt and abuse here, but not any malignity. At this sally, we are told, Charles fell into a violent fit of laughter, and, turning round to Lord Rochester, said, "Ods fish, Lory, your chaplain must be a bishop: put me in mind of him at the next death." But, however much South may have enjoyed thus setting the Chapel Royal in a roar, he was not fishing for a bishopric with his comic pulpit oratory. He had it several times in his power, after this, to take his seat upon the right reverend bench, but he always declined that distinction; and, although he was perhaps the most influential English ecclesiastic of his day, he continued to the end of his

life nothing more than prebendary of Westminster and canon of Christ Church, Oxford. In all other worldly matters, indeed, he showed the same disinterestedness, so worthy of him both as a Christian and as a wit.

LOCKE.

The only considerable literary name that belongs exclusively, or almost exclusively, to the first reign after the Revolution is that of Locke. John Locke, born in 1632, although his Adversariorum Methodus, or New Method of a Common-Place-Book, had appeared in French in Leclerc's Bibliothèque for 1686, and an abridgment of his celebrated Essay, and his first Letter on Toleration, both also in French, in the same publication for 1687 and 1688, had published nothing in English, or with his name, till he produced in 1690 the work which has ever since made him one of the best known of English writers, both in his own and in other countries, his Essay concerning Human Understanding. This was followed by his Second Letter on Toleration, and his two Treatises on Government, in the same year; his Considerations on Lowering the Interest of Money, in 1691; his Third Letter on Toleration, in 1692; his Thoughts concerning Education, in 1693; his Reasonableness of Christianity, in 1695; and various controversial tracts in reply to his assailants, Dr. Edwards and Bishop Stillingfleet, between that date and his death in 1704. After his death appeared his Conduct of the Understanding, and several theological treatises, the composition of which had been the employment of the last years of his industrious and productive old age. Locke's famous Essay was the first work, perhaps in any language, which professedly or systematically attempted to popularise metaphysical philosophy. The author's persuasion apparently is, that there is nothing much more difficult to comprehend, or at least more incomprehensible, about the operations of the human mind than there is in the movements of an eight-day clock. What he especially sets himself to run down and do away with, from the beginning to the end of his book, is the notion that there is any mystery in the subject he has undertaken to explain which cannot be made clear to whoever will only listen with fair attention to the exposition. Locke was a man of

great moral worth, of the highest integrity, disinterested, just, tolerant, and humane, as well as of extraordinary penetration and capacity; moreover, he was probably as free from anything like self-conceit, or the over-estimation either of his own virtues or his own talents, as people of good sense usually are; and he had undoubtedly a great respect for the deity, as the First Magistrate of the universe; yet, to a mind differently constituted from his, and which, instead of seeing a mystery in nothing, sees a mystery in all things, there is, it must be confessed, something so unsatisfactory in the whole strain of his philosophy, that his merits perhaps will scarcely be rated by such a mind so high as they deserve. It seems all like a man, if not trying to deceive others, at least so perseveringly shutting his eyes upon, and turning away his head from, every real difficulty, that he may be almost said to be wilfully deceiving himself; merely skimming the surface of his subject while he assumes the air of exploring it to the bottom; repelling objections sometimes by dexterously thrusting them aside, mostly by not noticing them at all: in other words, a piece of mere clever and plausible, but hollow and insincere, conjuring; a vain show of wisdom, having in it almost as little of the real as of the reverential. No awe, no wonder, no self-distrust—no sense of anything above—we might almost say beside, or out of—the intellect of the speculator. Malebranche saw all things in God; Locke saw all things in himself. Nay, he went all but the length of seeing the whole universe in his five corporeal senses; and the majority of his disciples in more recent times have boldly leaped across the slight barrier which kept their master back from that great discovery. But, while there will continue to be in many minds this dissent from the general spirit of Locke's philosophy, and also from much in his conclusions, the Essay on Human Understanding will, nevertheless, always be recognized as not only an illustrious monument of the penetration, ingenuity, and other high mental powers and resources of its author, but as a fundamental book in modern metaphysics. It is, as has been remarked, the first comprehensive survey that had been attempted of the whole mind and its faculties; and the very conception of such a design argued an intellect of no common reach, originality, and boldness. It will remain also of very considerable value as an extensive register of facts, and a storehouse of acute and often suggestive observations on psychological phenomena, whatever may be the fate of the

views propounded in it as aspiring to constitute a metaphysical system. Further, it is not to be denied that this work has exercised a powerful influence upon the course of philosophical inquiry and opinion ever since its appearance. At first, in particular, it did good service in putting finally to the rout some fantastic notions and methods that still lingered in the schools; it was the loudest and most comprehensive proclamation that had yet been made of the liberation of philosophy from the dominion of authority; but Locke's was a mind stronger and better furnished for the work of pulling down than of building up: he had enough of clearsightedness and independence of mental character for the one; whatever endowments of a different kind he possessed, he had too little imagination, or creative power, for the other. Besides, the very passionless character of his mind would have unfitted him for going far into the philosophy of our complex nature, in which the passions are the revealers and teachers of all the deepest truths, and alone afford us any intimation of many things which, even with the aid of their lurid light, we discern but as fearful and unfathomable mysteries. What would Shakespeare's understanding of the philosophy of human nature have been, if he had had no more imagination and passion in his own nature than Locke?

Writers on Political Economy.

Among Locke's writings are two treatises, the one entitled Considerations on the Lowering of Interest and Raising the Value of Money, published in 1691, the other entitled Further Considerations on Raising the Value of Money, published in 1695. Some of the most important questions in what is now called Political Economy had been discussed in England in a popular fashion before the end of the sixteenth century; but it was only since the Revolution that attempts had been made to settle the general principles of the science of wealth or to give it a systematic form. Sir William Petty, Sir Josiah Child, and Mr. Thomas Mun had all written upon the subject of money before Locke, and both his publications and theirs contain many sound and valuable observations; but by far the most remarkable work belonging to this early era of the science is Sir Dudley

North's Discourses on Trade, principally directed to the cases of Interest, Coinage, Clipping, and Increase of Money, published in the same year with Locke's first tract, and with reference to the same matter, the general recoinage of the silver currency, which was about this time first proposed by the government, and was accomplished five years afterwards. Sir Dudley's pamphlet was in opposition to a material point of the plan actually adopted, by which the loss arising from the clipped money was thrown upon the public, and the publication is supposed to have been suppressed; but a few years ago a distinguished living political economist (Mr. M'Culloch) was fortunate enough to recover a copy, then supposed to be the only one in existence.* Its leading principle is simply, that gold and silver differ commercially in no respect whatever from other commodities; and on this basis the author has reared a theory entirely unvitiated by the ancient and almost universally received errors and prejudices of his day, and, so far as it goes, as perfect as the subject admits of. A more voluminous writer on commerce and finance in this and the next reign was Dr. Charles Davenant (son of Sir William, the poet), whose works, however, are more valuable for the mere facts they record than for any light they throw on the principles of economical science. Davenant, who held the office of Inspector-general of Exports and Imports, was a laborious examiner of documents and accounts, and a sensible man withal, but rather dull, it must be allowed, notwithstanding his poetical descent.

Boyle and Bentley Controversy.

In taking leave of the seventeenth century we must not omit noticing the memorable contest of wit and learning which arose, in the reign of William, out of the publication of an edition of the Greek Epistles attributed to Phalaris, the tyrant of Agrigentum, in Sicily, famous for his brazen bull, by the Honourable Charles Boyle (afterwards Earl of Orrery). In the preface to his book, which was published in the beginning of the year 1695, Boyle,

* In his Literature of Political Economy, 8vo. Lond. 1845, p. 43, Mr. M'Culloch informs us that he has since met with two other copies of the original edition.

who was then an undergraduate of Christ Church, Oxford, animadverted with some severity upon a piece of discourtesy which he conceived he had met with from Dr. Bentley, then keeper of the King's Library, in regard to the loan of a manuscript of the Epistles there preserved. After an interval of two years Bentley published, in an appendix to the second edition of his friend William Wotton's Reflections on Ancient and Modern Learning, an elaborate exposition of his reasons for holding the compositions printed by Boyle, and ranked by him with the most precious remains of the remotest antiquity, to be a comparatively modern forgery; and at the same time took an opportunity both of replying to the charge brought against him by Boyle (from which he apparently clears himself), and of criticising the late edition of the Epistles with great asperity, and with all the power of his vast erudition and unrivalled acumen. This, the first edition of Bentley's celebrated Dissertation on Phalaris, is now, in truth, universally considered to have established the spuriousness of the Epistles conclusively and unanswerably. An answer, however, was produced to it in the following year (1698), under the title of Dr. Bentley's Dissertations on the Epistles of Phalaris and the Fables of Æsop examined; to which Boyle's name was prefixed, but which is believed to have been chiefly the composition of his tutor, the celebrated Dr. Francis Atterbury, afterwards Bishop of Rochester, whose very considerable attainments in classical scholarship were enlivened and decorated by the finest spirit of wit and humour. Some others of the most distinguished among the Oxford men also contributed their blows or missiles; so that the cause of the old Sicilian tyrant against the denier and derider of his literary pretensions may be said to have been taken up and defended by the whole force and fury of the university. The laugh was turned for the moment against Bentley by this attack, which was for the most part a fierce personal invective; but he set at least the original question at rest, and effectually put down the pretensions of his assailants to cope with him in the field of learning and criticism, by a second and enlarged edition of his Dissertation, which he brought forth after about another year's interval. To this a reply was threatened, but none was ever made. Bentley's performance was in every way a masterpiece. "Professedly controversial," observes a late writer, "it embodies a mass of accurate information relative to historical facts, antiquities, chronology, and philology, such as we may

safely say has rarely been collected in the same space; and the reader cannot fail to admire the ingenuity with which things apparently trifling, or foreign to the point in question, are made effective in illustrating or proving the author's views. Nothing shows so well how thoroughly digested and familiar was the vast stock of reading which Bentley possessed. The banter and ridicule of his opponents are returned with interest, and the reader is reconciled to what might seem to savour too much of arrogance and the bitterness of controversy by a sense of the strong provocation given to the author."* We may add a few words from Mr. Hallam's notice of this controversy:— "It was the first great literary war that had been waged in England; and, like that of Troy, it has still the prerogative of being remembered after the Epistles of Phalaris are as much buried as the walls of Troy itself. Both combatants were skilful in wielding the sword: the arms of Boyle, in Swift's language, were given him by all the gods;† but his antagonist stood forward in no such figurative strength, master of a learning to which nothing parallel had been known in England, and that directed by an understanding prompt, discriminating, not idly sceptical, but still farther removed from trust in authority, sagacious in perceiving corruptions of language, and ingenious, at the least, in removing them, with a style rapid, concise, amusing, and superior to Boyle in that which he had most to boast, a sarcastic wit."‡ The Battle of the Books, here alluded to, the production of the afterwards renowned Jonathan Swift, did not, however, appear till the year 1704. In fact the dispute about the authenticity of the Epistles of Phalaris had formed all along only a branch of a larger controversy,

* Article on Bentley, in Penny Cyclopædia, iv. 250.

† Upon this assertion of Swift's, Boyle's son, John earl of Orrery, remarks, with a filial or family partiality that is excusable enough—"I shall not dispute about the gift of the armour; but thus far I will venture to observe, that the gods never bestowed celestial armour except upon heroes whose courage and superior strength distinguished them from the rest of mankind; whose merits and abilities were already conspicuous; and who could wield, though young, the sword of Mars, and adorn it with all the virtues of Minerva."—Remarks on the Life and Writings of Dr. Swift, 5th edition, p. 228. Charles Boyle was in truth a person of respectable talent; but, although in after life he wrote a comedy (As You Find It), and some other trifles, his wit does not appear to have ripened with his years, and nothing that he produced ever excited any attention except his college publication in the Phalaris controversy.

‡ Lit. of Eur. iv. 10.

which was kept up for some years after the question of Phalaris had been set at rest and abandoned on all hands. It was Swift's relation and patron, Sir William Temple, who had first called attention to the Epistles by a passage in one of his Essays, in which he endeavoured to maintain the superiority of the ancients over the moderns in all kinds of learning and knowledge, the physical and experimental sciences themselves not excepted. It was in answer to Temple's Essay, which was itself a reply to Perrault's Parallèle des Anciens et Modernes, published at Paris in 1687, that Wotton wrote his Reflections, the first edition of which appeared in 1694, and expressed therein an opinion unfavourable to the antiquity of the Epistles, which Temple had both eulogised in warm terms and cited as of unquestionable authenticity. This argument between Temple as the champion-general of the ancients, and Wotton of the moderns, which produced a great many more publications from both, and from their respective partisans, is the main subject of the Battle of the Books, which was probably the last blow struck in the pen-and-ink war, and at any rate is the last that is now remembered.*

SWIFT.

The Tale of a Tub and the Battle of the Books, published together, were the first announcement of the greatest master of satire at once comic and caustic that has yet appeared in our language. Swift, born in Dublin in 1667, had already, in the last years of the reign of King William, made himself known by two volumes of Letters selected from the papers of his friend Temple (who died in 1699), and also by a political pamphlet in favour of the ministry of the day, which attracted little notice, and gave as little promise of his future eminence as a writer. To politics as well as satire, however, he adhered throughout his career—often blending the two, but producing scarcely anything, if we may not except some of his effusions in verse, that was not either satirical or political. His course of authorship as a political writer may be considered properly to begin with his Letter con-

* Most readers will remember Lord Macaulay's brilliant sketch of this controversy in his Essay on Sir William Temple, Edin. Rev. for Oct. 1838.

cerning the Sacramental Test, and another high Tory and high Church tract, which he published in 1708; in which same year he also came forward with his ironical Argument for the Abolition of Christianity, and, in his humorous Predictions first assumed his *nom de guerre* of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esquire, subsequently made so famous by other *jeux d'esprit* in the same style, and by its adoption soon after by the wits of the Tatler. Of his other most notable performances, his Conduct of the Allies was published in 1712; his Public Spirit of the Whigs, in 1714; his Drapier's Letters, in 1724; his immortal Gulliver's Travels, in 1727; and his Polite Conversation, which, however, had been written many years before, in 1738. His poem of Cadenus and Vanessa, besides, had appeared, without his consent, in 1723, soon after the death of Miss Hester Vanhomrigh, its heroine. The History of the Four Last Years of Queen Anne (if his, which there can hardly be a doubt that it is), the Directions for Servants, many of his verses and other shorter pieces, and his Diary written to Stella (Miss Johnson, whom he eventually married), were none of them printed till after, some of them not till long after, his death, which took place in 1745.

"O thou!" exclaims his friend Pope,

> ——"whatever title please thine ear,
> Dean, Drapier, Bickerstaff, or Gulliver!
> Whether thou choose Cervantes' serious air,
> Or laugh and shake in Rabelais' easy chair,
> Or praise the court, or magnify mankind,
> Or thy grieved country's copper chains unbind,"—

lines that describe comprehensively enough the celebrated dean's genius and writings—what he did and what he was. And the first remark to be made about Swift is, that into everything that came from his pen he put a strong infusion of himself; that in his writings we read the man—not merely his intellectual ability, but his moral nature, his passions, his principles, his prejudices, his humours, his whole temper and individuality. The common herd of writers have no individuality at all; those of the very highest class can assume at will any other individuality as perfectly as their own—they have no exclusiveness. Next under this highest class stand those whose individuality is at once their strength and their weakness;—their strength, inasmuch as it distinguishes them from and lifts them far above the multitude of writers of mere talent or expository skill; their weakness

and bondage, in that it will not be thrown off, and that it withholds them from ever going out of themselves, and rising from the merely characteristic, striking, or picturesque, either to the dramatic or to the beautiful, of both of which equally the spirit is unegotistic and universal. To this class, which is not the highest but the next to it, Swift belongs. The class, however, like both that which is above and that which is below it, is one of wide comprehension, and includes many degrees of power, and even many diversities of gifts. Swift was neither a Cervantes nor a Rabelais; but yet, with something that was peculiar to himself, he combined considerable portions of both. He had more of Cervantes than Rabelais had, and more of Rabelais than was given to Cervantes. There cannot be claimed for him the refinement, the humanity, the pathos, the noble elevation of the Spaniard—all that irradiates and beautifies his satire and drollery as the blue sky does the earth it bends over; neither, with all his ingenuity and fertility, does our English wit and humourist anywhere display either the same inexhaustible abundance of grotesque invention, or the same gaiety and luxuriance of fancy, with the historian of the Doings and Sayings of the Giant Gargantua. Yet neither Cervantes nor Rabelais, nor both combined, could have written the Tale of a Tub, or the Battle of the Books. The torrent of triumphant merriment is broader and more rushing than anything of the same kind in either. When we look indeed to the perfection and exactness of the allegory at all points, to the biting sharpness and at the same time the hilarity and comic animation of the satire, to its strong and unpausing yet easy and natural flow, to the incessant blaze of the wit and humour, and to the style so clear, so vivid and expressive, so idiomatic, so English, so true and appropriate in all its varieties, narrative, didactic, rhetorical, colloquial, as we know no work of its class in our own language that as a whole approaches the Tale of a Tub, so we doubt if there be another quite equal to it in any language. Even a few extracts may give some notion of its wonderful spirit and brilliancy. Passing over some preliminary matter—among other things the inimitable Dedication to Prince Posterity—we come in what is entitled Section Second to the proper commencement of the story, the deathbed bequest by the father to his three sons, all born at a birth, of a new coat each—the miraculous virtues of the garments being, that with good keeping they would last them fresh and sound as long as they

lived, and that they would grow with the bodies of their wearers, lengthening and widening of themselves, so as always to fit. "Here," said the father; "let me see them on you before I die. So; very well; pray, children, wear them clean, and brush them often. You will find in my will—here it is—full instructions in every particular concerning the wearing and management of your coats; wherein you must be very exact, to avoid the penalties I have appointed for every transgression or neglect, upon which your future fortunes will entirely depend. I have also commanded in my will that you should live together in one house like brethren and friends, for then you will be sure to thrive, and not otherwise." The will in question is the Bible. The three young men, after their father's death, go forth all together to seek their fortunes. "I shall not trouble you," says our author, "with recounting what adventures they met with for the first seven years, any further than by taking notice that they carefully observed their father's will, and kept their coats in very good order; that they travelled through several countries, encountered a reasonable quantity of giants, and slew certain dragons." And thus he dismisses the primitive ages of Christianity. "Being now, however, arrived at the proper age for producing themselves," he tells us, "they came up to town, and fell in love with the ladies"—among the rest, and especially, with the Duchess d'Argent (Covetousness), Madame de Grands Titres (Ambition), and the Countess d'Orgueil (Pride). We must refer the reader to the original for the account of the courses they took, with no effect, to gain the favour of these ladies—giving themselves for that purpose to the acquisition and practice of all the fashionable ways of the town; and also for the full exposition of the facetious and profound theory that follows on the subject of dress—that the universe is only a large suit of clothes, and that every part of nature, and man himself, is nothing more; so that, argues our author, "what the world calls improperly suits of clothes are in reality the most refined species of animals, or, to proceed higher, that they are rational creatures or men." "Is it not they," he asks, "and they alone who walk the streets?" "It is true, indeed," he adds, "that these animals, which are truly only called suits of clothes, or dresses, do, according to certain compositions, receive different appellations. If one of them be trimmed up with a gold chain, and a red gown, and a white rod, and a great horse, it is called a lord mayor; if certain ermines and furs

be placed in a certain position, we style them a judge; and so an apt conjunction of lawn and black satin we entitle a bishop." The devotees of dress are represented as a sect that had lately arisen, whose tenets had spread extensively in the great world, and whose supreme deity was a tailor. "They worshipped," we are told, "a sort of idol, who, as their doctrine delivered, did daily create men by a kind of manufactory operation. This idol they placed in the highest part of the house on an altar erected about three foot: he was shown in the posture of a Persian emperor, sitting on a superficies, with his legs interwoven under him. This god had a goose for his ensign: whence it is that some learned men pretend to deduce his original from Jupiter Capitolinus. At his left hand, beneath the altar, hell seemed to open and catch at the animals the idol was creating; to prevent which, certain of his priests hourly flung in pieces of the uninformed mass, or substance, and sometimes whole limbs already enlivened, which that horrid gulf insatiably swallowed, terrible to behold." "To this system of religion," it is added, "were tagged several subaltern doctrines, which were entertained with great vogue; as, particularly, the faculties of the mind were deduced by the learned among them in this manner:—embroidery was sheer wit, gold fringe was agreeable conversation, gold lace was repartee, a huge long periwig was humour, and a coat full of powder was very good raillery—all which required abundance of *finesse* and *delicatesse* to manage with advantage, as well as a strict observance of the times and fashions." And then the story proceeds as follows:—

These opinions therefore were so universal, as well as the practices of them, that our three brother adventurers, as their circumstances then stood, were strangely at a loss. For, on the one side, the three ladies they addressed themselves to, whom we have named already, were ever at the very top of the fashion, and abhorred all that were below it but the breadth of a hair. On the other side, their father's will was very precise; and it was the main precept in it, with the greatest penalties annexed, not to add or diminish from their coats one thread, without a positive command in the will. Now the coats their father had left them were, it is true, of very good cloth, and besides so neatly sewn you would swear they were all of a piece; but at the same time very plain, and with little or no ornament; and it happened that before they were a month in town great shoulder-knots came up; straight all the world wore shoulder-knots—no approaching the ladies' *ruelles* without the *quota* of shoulder-knots. That fellow, cries one, has no soul; where is his shoulder-knot? Our three

brethren soon discovered their want by sad experience, meeting in their walks with forty mortifications and indignities. If they went to the playhouse, the doorkeeper showed them into the twelvepenny gallery; if they called a boat, says a waterman, "I am first sculler;" if they stepped to the Rose to take a bottle, the drawer would cry, "Friend, we sell no ale;" if they went to visit a lady, a footman met them at the door with "Pray send up your message." In this unhappy case they went immediately to consult their father's will, read it over and over, but not a word of the shoulder-knot. What should they do? What temper[1] should they find? Obedience was absolutely necessary, and yet shoulder-knots appeared extremely requisite. After much thought, one of the brothers, who happened to be more booklearned than the other two, said he had found an expedient. It is true, said he, there is nothing here in this will, *totidem verbis*,[2] making mention of shoulder-knots; but I dare conjecture we may find them *inclusive*,[3] or *totidem syllabis*.[4] This distinction was immediately approved by all, and so they fell again to examine; but their evil star had so directed the matter that the first syllable was not to be found in the whole writings. Upon which disappointment, he who found the former evasion took heart, and said, "Brothers, there are yet hopes; for, though we cannot find them *totidem verbis*, nor *totidem syllabis*, I dare engage we shall make them out *tertio modo*,[5] or *totidem literis*.[6] This discovery was also highly commended, upon which they fell once more to the scrutiny, and soon picked out S, H, O, U, L, D, E, R; when the same planet, enemy to their repose, had wonderfully contrived that a K was not to be found. Here was a weighty difficulty! But the distinguishing brother, for whom we shall hereafter find a name, now his hand was in, proved by a very good argument that K was a modern, illegitimate letter, unknown to the learned ages, nor any where to be found in ancient manuscripts. It is true, said he, the word *Calendar* hath in Q. V. C.[7] been sometimes written with a K, but erroneously; for in the best copies it has been ever spelt with a C. And, by consequence, it was a gross mistake in our language to spell *knot* with a K; but that from henceforward he would take care it should be written with a C. Upon this all further difficulty vanished—shoulder-knots were made clearly out to be *jure paterno*,[8] and our three gentlemen swaggered with as large and as flaunting ones as the best. But, as human happiness is of a very short duration, so in those days were human fashions, upon which it entirely depends. Shoulder-knots had their time, and we must now imagine them in their decline; for a certain lord came just from Paris, with fifty yards of gold lace upon his coat, exactly trimmed after the court fashion of that month. In two days all mankind appeared closed up in bars of gold lace. . . . . What should our three knights do in this momentous affair? They had suffi-

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[1] Middle course.
[2] In so many words.
[3] Inclusively.
[4] In so many syllables.
[5] In the third mode or manner.
[6] In so many letters.
[7] Quibusdem veteribus codicibus (in some ancient manuscripts).
[8] Conformable to paternal law.

ciently strained a point already in the affair of shoulder-knots: upon recourse to the will, nothing appeared there but *altum silentium.*[1] That of the shoulder-knot was a loose, flying, circumstantial point; but this of gold lace seemed too considerable an alteration without better warrant; it did *aliquo modo essentiæ adhærere,*[2] and therefore required a positive precept. But about this time it fell out that the learned brother aforesaid had read *Aristotelis Dialectica,*[3] and especially that wonderful piece *De Interpretatione,*[4] which has the faculty of teaching its readers to find out a meaning in everything but itself; like commentators on the Revelations, who proceed prophets without understanding a syllable of the text. Brothers, said he, you are to be informed that of wills *duo sunt genera,*[5] nuncupatory and scriptory: that in the scriptory will here before us there is no precept or mention about gold lace, *conceditur;*[6] but, *si idem affirmetur de nuncupatorio, negatur.*[7] For, brothers, if you remember, we heard a fellow say when we were boys that he heard my father's man say that he would advise his sons to get gold lace on their coats as soon as ever they could procure money to buy it. By G—! that is very true, cries the other: I remember it perfectly well, says the third. And so, without more ado, they got the largest gold lace in the parish, and walked about as fine as lords.

A while after there came up in fashion a pretty sort of flame-coloured satin for lining,[8] and the mercer brought a pattern of it immediately to our three gentlemen. "An' please your worships," said he, "my Lord Conway and Sir John Walters had linings out of this very piece last night: it takes wonderfully, and I shall not have a remnant left enough to make my wife a pincushion by to-morrow morning at ten o'clock." Upon this they fell again to rummage the will, because the present case also required a positive precept; the lining being held by orthodox writers to be of the essence of the coat. After a long search they could fix upon nothing to the matter in hand, except a short advice of their father in the will to take care of fire and put out their candles before they went to sleep.[9] This, though a good deal for the purpose, and helping very far towards self-conviction, yet not seeming wholly of force to establish a command (being resolved to avoid further scruple, as well as future occasion for scandal), says he that was the scholar, I remember to have read in wills of a codicil annexed, which is indeed a part of the will, and what it contains has equal authority with the rest. Now, I have been considering of this same will here before us, and I cannot reckon it to be complete for want of such a

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[1] Deep silence.

[2] In some measure belong to the essence. These are all phrases of the schoolmen, whose endless distinctions and methods of reasoning are ridiculed.

[3] Aristotle's Dialectics.

[4] On Interpretation.

[5] There are two kinds.

[6] Is granted.

[7] If the same thing be affirmed of the nuncupatory, it is denied. Of course, the nuncupatory will is the oral traditions of the Romish church.

[8] The fire of purgatory, and prayers for the dead.

[9] To subdue their lusts, that they might escape the fire of hell.

codicil: I will therefore fasten one in its proper place very dexterously. I have had it by me some time: it was written by a dog-keeper of my grandfather's,[1] and talks a great deal, as good luck would have it, of this very flame-coloured satin. The project was immediately approved by the other two; an old parchment scroll was tagged on according to art, in the form of a codicil annexed, and the satin bought and worn.

Next winter a player, hired for the purpose by the corporation of fringe-makers, acted his part in a new comedy, all covered with silver fringe, and, according to the laudable custom, gave rise to that fashion. Upon which the brothers, consulting their father's will, to their great astonishment, found these words: *Item*, I charge and command my said three sons to wear no sort of silver fringe upon or about their said coats, &c., with a penalty, in case of disobedience, too long here to insert. However, after some pause, the brother so often mentioned for his erudition, who was well skilled in criticisms, had found in a certain author, which he said should be nameless, that the same word which in the will is called fringe does also signify a broomstick, and doubtless ought to have the same interpretation in this paragraph. This another of the brothers disliked, because of that epithet silver, which could not, he humbly conceived, in propriety of speech, be reasonably applied to a broomstick; but it was replied upon him that this epithet was understood in a mythological and allegorical sense. However, he objected again why their father should forbid them to wear a broomstick on their coats, a caution that seemed unnatural and impertinent; upon which he was taken up short, as one that spoke irreverently of a mystery, which doubtless was very useful and significant, but ought not to be over-curiously pried into or nicely reasoned upon. And, in short, their father's authority being now considerably sunk, this expedient was allowed to serve as a lawful dispensation for wearing their full proportion of silver fringe.

A while after was revived an old fashion, long antiquated, of embroidery with Indian figures of men, women, and children.[2] Here they remembered but too well how their father had always abhorred this fashion; that he made several paragraphs on purpose, importing his utter detestation of it, and bestowing his everlasting curse to his sons whenever they should wear it. For all this, in a few days they appeared higher in the fashion than any body else in the town. But they solved the matter by saying that these figures were not at all the same with those that were formerly worn and were meant in the will. Besides, they did not wear them in the sense as forbidden by their father, but as they were a commendable custom, and of great use to the public. That these rigorous clauses in the will did therefore require some allowance and a favourable interpretation, and ought to be understood *cum grano salis*.

But, fashions perpetually altering in that age, the scholastic brother grew weary of searching farther evasions and solving everlasting contradictions. Resolved, therefore, at all hazards to comply with the modes

[1] Pointed, apparently, at the Apocrypha.

[2] Images of saints.

of the world, they concerted matters together, and agreed unanimously to lock up their father's will in a strong box, brought out of Greece or Italy, I have forgotten which, and trouble themselves no farther to examine it, but only refer to its authority whenever they thought fit;[1] in consequence whereof, a while after it grew a general mode to wear an infinite number of points, most of them tagged with silver;[2] upon which the scholar pronounced, *ex cathedra*,[3] that points were absolutely *jure paterno*, as they might very well remember. It is true, indeed, the fashion prescribed somewhat more than were directly named in the will; however, that they, as heirs general of their father, had power to make and add certain clauses for public emolument, though not deducible *totidem verbis* from the letter of the will, or else *multa absurda sequerentur*.[4] This was understood for canonical, and therefore on the following Sunday they came to church all covered with points.

The learned brother, so often mentioned, was reckoned the best scholar in all that or the next street to it, insomuch as, having run something behindhand in the world, he obtained the favour of a certain lord[5] to receive him into his house, and to teach his children. A while after, the lord died; and he, by long practice upon his father's will, found the way of contriving a deed of conveyance of that house to himself and his heirs;[6] upon which he took possession, turned the young squires out, and received his brothers in their stead.

In all this the satire is as admirable for the fineness of its edge as for its force and liveliness; but in the sequel the drollery becomes still richer. The glory of the work undoubtedly is the fourth section, in which it is recounted how the learned brother, advanced in the world as we have seen, after a while would not allow the others to call him any longer brother, but Mr. Peter, and then Father Peter, and sometimes My Lord Peter; and what discoveries and inventions he fell upon to support his grandeur, including his purchase of a large continent in *terra australis incognita* (the other world), which (although its very existence was doubtful) he retailed in parcels to a continual succession of dealers and colonists, who were always shipwrecked in the voyage —his sovereign remedy for the worms (penance and fasting)— his whispering office (the confessional)—his office of insurance (indulgences)—his puppets and raree-shows (ceremonies and

[1] The prohibition of the use of the Scriptures, except in the Greek or Latin languages.

[2] Novel rites and doctrines, many of which were sources of pecuniary profit.

[3] From the seat of authority, in allusion to the papal decretals and bulls.

[4] Many absurd consequences would follow.

[5] Constantine the Great.

[6] The temporal sovereignty claimed by the popes.

processions)—his famous universal pickle (holy water)—above all, his bulls, descended from those of Colchis, only that by some accident or mismanagement they had lost their brazen, and got, instead, leaden feet; and still better, the paper pardons he used to sell to poor condemned Newgate wretches, commanding all mayors, sheriffs, jailers, &c. to set the holder at large, in terms more imperative than we care to quote, but which yet never proved of any use; and how, when he had in these ways become exceeding rich, his head began to turn, and he grew in fact distracted, conceiving the strangest imaginations in the world, sometimes, in the height of his fits, calling himself God Almighty and monarch of the universe; taking three old high-crowned hats, and clapping them all on his head three-story-high, with a large bunch of keys at his girdle, and an angling-rod in his hands, "in which guise, whoever went to take him by the hand in the way of salutation, Peter, with much grace, like a well-educated spaniel, would present them with his foot;" and "whoever walked by without paying him their compliments, having a wonderful strong breath, he would blow their hats off into the dirt;" and how his affairs at home went upside down, and his two brothers had a wretched time; "where his first *boutade** was to kick both their wives one morning out of doors, and his own too, and, in their stead, gave orders to pick up the first three strollers that could be met with in the streets;" and the crowning scene of the transubstantiation of the loaf of brown bread into the shoulder of mutton, with sundry other minor illustrations of Peter's lying, swearing, and mad tyranny and extravagance. But, as a shorter and more manageable passage, we will take instead for our next extract the account in a subsequent chapter of the first proceedings of his two brothers, Martin (the representative of Lutheranism and the Church of England) and Jack (who stands for Calvinism, Presbytery, and Protestant dissent), after, Peter having grown so scandalous that all the neighbourhood began in plain words to say he was no better than a knave, they had left his house, or rather been kicked out of it, having previously, however, both contrived to take a copy of their father's will, and also "to break open the cellar-door, and get a little good drink to spirit and comfort their hearts." At first they took a lodging together; but although, we are told, they "had lived in much friendship and agreement under the tyranny of

* A sudden jerk or lash given to a horse.

their brother Peter, as it is the talent of fellow-sufferers to do," now that they were left to themselves it soon began to appear that their complexions, or tempers, were extremely different, "which," says our author, "the present posture of their affairs gave them sudden opportunity to discover;" and then he proceeds as follows:—

I ought in method to have informed the reader, about fifty pages ago, of a fancy Lord Peter took, and infused into his brothers, to wear on their coats whatever trimmings came up in fashion; never pulling off any as they went out of the mode, but keeping on all together, which amounted in time to a medley the most antic you can possibly conceive; and this to a degree, that, upon the time of their falling out, there was hardly a thread of the original coat to be seen; but an infinite quantity of lace, and ribbons, and fringe, and embroidery, and points—I mean only those tagged with silver, for the rest fell off. Now this material circumstance, having been forgot in due place, as good fortune has ordered, comes in very properly here, when the two brothers are just going to reform their vestures into the primitive state prescribed by their father's will.

They both unanimously entered upon this great work, looking sometimes on their coats and sometimes on the will. Martin laid the first hand; at one twitch brought off a large handful of points; and, with a second pull, stripped away ten dozen yards of fringe. But, when he had gone thus far, he demurred a while: he knew very well there yet remained a great deal more to be done: however, the first heat being over, his violence began to cool, and he resolved to proceed more moderately in the rest of the work, having already narrowly escaped a swinging rent in pulling off the points, which, being tagged with silver (as we have observed before), the judicious workman had, with much sagacity, double sewn, to preserve them from falling. Resolving, therefore, to rid his coat of a large quantity of gold lace, he picked up the stitches with much caution, and diligently gleaned out all the loose threads as he went, which proved to be a work of time. Then he fell about the embroidered Indian figures of men, women, and children, against which, as you have heard in its due place, their father's testament was extremely exact and severe: these, with much dexterity and application, were, after a while, quite eradicated or utterly defaced. For the rest, where he observed the embroidery to be worked so close as not to be got away without damaging the cloth, or where it served to hide or strengthen any flaw in the body of the coat, contracted by the perpetual tampering of workmen upon it, he concluded the wisest course was to let it remain, resolving in no case whatsoever that the substance of the stuff should suffer injury, which he thought the best method for serving the true intent and meaning of his father's will. And this is the nearest account I have been able to collect of Martin's proceedings upon this great revolution.

But his brother Jack, whose adventures will be so extraordinary as to

furnish a great part in the remainder of this discourse, entered upon the matter with other thoughts and a quite different spirit. For the memory of Lord Peter's injuries produced a degree of hatred and spite, which had a much greater share of inciting him than any regard after his father's commands; since these appeared, at the best, only secondary and subservient to the other. However, for this medley of humour he made a shift to find a very plausible name, honouring it with the title of zeal; which is perhaps the most significant word that has been ever yet produced in any language; as I think I have fully proved in my excellent analytical discourse upon that subject; wherein I have deduced a histori-theo-physi-logical account of zeal, showing how it first proceeded from a notion into a word, and thence, in a hot summer, ripened into a tangible substance. This work, containing three large volumes in folio, I design very shortly to publish by the modern way of subscription, not doubting but the nobility and gentry of the land will give me all possible encouragement; having had already a taste of what I am able to perform.

I record, therefore, that brother Jack, brimful of this miraculous compound, reflecting with indignation upon Peter's tyranny, and farther provoked by the despondency of Martin, prefaced his resolutions to this purpose. "What," said he, "a rogue, that locked up his drink, turned away our wives, cheated us of our fortunes; palmed his damned crusts upon us for mutton; and at last kicked us out of doors; must we be in his fashions; with a pox! A rascal, besides, that all the street cries out against." Having thus kindled and inflamed himself as high as possible, and by consequence in a delicate temper for beginning a reformation, he set about the work immediately; and in three minutes made more dispatch than Martin had done in as many hours. For, courteous reader, you are given to understand that zeal is never so highly obliged as when you set it a tearing; and Jack, who doted on that quality in himself, allowed it at this time its full swing. Thus it happened that, stripping down a parcel of gold lace a little too hastily, he rent the main body of his coat from top to bottom; and, whereas his talent was not of the happiest in taking up a stitch, he knew no better way than to darn it again with pack-thread and a skewer. But the matter was yet infinitely worse (I record it with tears) when he proceeded to the embroidery; for, being clumsy by nature, and of temper impatient; withal, beholding millions of stitches that required the nicest hand and sedatest constitution to extricate; in a great rage he tore off the whole piece, cloth and all, and flung it into the kennel, and furiously thus continued his career:—"Ah, good brother Martin," said he, "do as I do, for the love of God; strip, tear, pull, rend, flay off all, that we may appear as unlike that rogue Peter as it is possible: I would not for a hundred pounds carry the least mark about me that might give occasion to the neighbours of suspecting that I was related to such a rascal." But Martin, who at this time happened to be extremely phlegmatic and sedate, begged his brother, of all love, not to damage his coat by any means; for he never would get such another; desired him to consider that it was not their business to form their actions by any reflection upon Peter, but by

observing the rules prescribed in their father's will. That he should remember Peter was still their brother, whatever faults or injuries he had committed; and therefore they should by all means avoid such a thought as that of taking measures for good and evil from no other rule than of opposition to him. That it was true the testament of their good father was very exact in what related to the wearing of their coats: yet it was no less penal and strict in prescribing agreement and friendship and affection between them. And, therefore, if straining a point were at all dispensable, it would certainly be so rather to the advance of unity than increase of contradiction.

Martin had still proceeded as gravely as he began, and doubtless would have delivered an admirable lecture of morality, which might have exceedingly contributed to my reader's repose both of body and mind, the true ultimate end of ethics; but Jack was already gone a flight-shot beyond his patience. And, as in scholastic disputes nothing serves to rouse the spleen of him that opposes so much as a kind of pedantic affected calmness in the respondent; disputants being for the most part like unequal scales, where the gravity of the one side advances the lightness of the other, and causes it to fly up and kick the beam; so it happened here that the weight of Martin's argument exalted Jack's levity, and made him fly out and spurn against his brother's moderation. In short, Martin's patience put Jack in a rage; but that which more afflicted him was, to observe his brother's coat so well reduced into the state of innocence; while his own was either wholly rent to his shirt, or those places which had escaped his cruel clutches were still in Peter's livery. So that he looked like a drunken beau, half rifled by bullies; or like a fresh tenant of Newgate, when he has refused the payment of garnish; or like a discovered shop-lifter, left to the mercy of Exchange women.[1] . . . . . Like any, or like all, of these, a medley of rags, and lace, and rents, and fringes, unfortunate Jack did now appear: he would have been extremely glad to see his coat in the condition of Martin's, but infinitely gladder to find that of Martin in the same predicament with his. However, since neither of these was likely to come to pass, he thought fit to lend the whole business another turn, and to dress up necessity into a virtue. Therefore, after as many of the fox's arguments as he could muster up for bringing Martin to reason, as he called it; or, as he meant it, into his own ragged, bob-tailed condition; and observing he said all to little purpose; what, alas! was left for the forlorn Jack to do, but, after a million of scurrilities against his brother, to run mad with spleen, and spite, and contradiction. To be short, here began a mortal breach between these two. Jack went immediately to new lodgings, and in a few days it was for certain reported that he had run out of his wits. In a short time after, he appeared abroad, and confirmed the report by falling into the oddest whimseys that ever a sick brain conceived.

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[1] The women who kept the shops in the galleries of the Old Royal Exchange.

How capital, too, is the following, which is all we can afford to give of Jack's vagaries:—

He would stand in the turning of a street, and, calling to those who passed by, would cry to one, "Worthy Sir, do me the honour of a good slap in the chaps." To another, "Honest friend, pray favour me with a handsome kick . . . . . Madam, shall I entreat a small box on the ear from your ladyship's fair hands? Noble captain, lend a reasonable thwack, for the love of God, with that cane of yours over these poor shoulders." And when he had, by such earnest solicitations, made a shift to procure a basting sufficient to swell up his fancy and his sides, he would return home extremely comforted, and full of terrible accounts of what he had undergone for the public good. "Observe this stroke," said he, showing his bare shoulders: "a plaguy janisary gave it me this morning, at seven o'clock, as, with much ado, I was driving off the Great Turk. Neighbours, mind, this broken head deserves a plaster; had poor Jack been tender of his noddle, you would have seen the pope and the French king, long before this time of day, among your wives and your warehouses. Dear Christians, the Great Mogul was come as far as Whitechapel, and you may thank these poor sides that he hath not (God bless us!) already swallowed up man, woman, and child."

It was highly worth observing the singular effects of that aversion or antipathy which Jack and his brother Peter seemed, even to an affectation, to bear against each other. Peter had lately done some rogueries that forced him to abscond, and he seldom ventured to stir out before night, for fear of bailiffs. Their lodgings were at the two most distant parts of the town from each other; and, whenever their occasions or humours called them abroad, they would make choice of the oddest unlikely times, and most uncouth rounds they could invent, that they might be sure to avoid one another; yet, after all this, it was their perpetual fortune to meet. The reason of which is easy enough to apprehend: for, the frenzy and the spleen of both having the same foundation, we may look upon them as two pair of compasses, equally extended, and the fixed foot of each remaining in the same centre, which, though moving contrary ways at first, will be sure to encounter somewhere or other in the circumference. Besides, it was among the great misfortunes of Jack to bear a huge personal resemblance with his brother Peter. Their humour and dispositions were not only the same, but there was a close analogy in their shape, their size, and their mien. Insomuch as nothing was more frequent than for a bailiff to seize Jack by the shoulders, and cry "Mr. Peter, you are the king's prisoner." Or, at other times, for one of Peter's nearest friends to accost Jack with open arms, "Dear Peter, I am glad to see thee; pray send me one of your best medicines for the worms." This, we may suppose, was a mortifying return of those pains and proceedings Jack had laboured in so long; and, finding how directly opposite all his endeavours had answered to the sole end and intention which he had proposed to himself, how could it avoid having terrible effects upon a head and heart so furnished as his?

However, the poor remainders of his coat bore all the punishment; the orient sun never entered upon his diurnal progress without missing a piece of it. He hired a tailor to stitch up the collar so close that it was ready to choke him, and squeezed out his eyes at such a rate as one could see nothing but the white. What little was left of the main substance of the coat he rubbed every day for two hours against a rough-cast wall, in order to grind away the remnants of lace and embroidery; but at the same time went on with so much violence, that he proceeded a heathen philosopher. Yet, after all he could do of this kind, the success continued still to disappoint his expectation. For, as it is the nature of rags to bear a kind of mock resemblance to finery, there being a sort of fluttering appearance in both which is not to be distinguished at a distance, in the dark, or by shortsighted eyes, so, in those junctures, it fared with Jack and his tatters, that they offered to the first view a ridiculous flaunting, which, assisting the resemblance in person and air, thwarted all his projects of separation, and left so near a similitude between them as frequently deceived the very disciples and followers of both.

It is said that one day in the latter part of his life, Swift, after looking over the Tale of a Tub for some time, suddenly shut the book, and exclaimed, "Good God! what a genius I had when I wrote that!" It was indeed something too good to be done over again; so happy a feat as to forbid all hope of its ever being surpassed, and in that way tending even to repress the courage and effort by which it might have been equalled. But at this period of his life Swift's genius certainly had a fervour, exuberance, and florid gaiety which it lost in a great degree (whatever it may have gained in compensation) as he advanced in years. Here and there in the Tale of a Tub, and likewise in the Battle of the Books, the expression rises to an eloquence, and sometimes to a poetic glow, such as is not to be found in any of his later writings either in prose or in verse. In the discourse, for instance, prefixed to the Tale, entitled The Author's Apology, how lively and apt is the figure by which "the usual fate of common answerers to books that are allowed to have any merit" is illustrated:—"They are indeed like annuals that grow about a young tree, and seem to vie with it for a summer, but fall and die with the leaves in autumn, and are never heard of more." Here is the oldest and most hackneyed of all similitudes—that of the elm and the vine—made again as bright and striking as the first time it was used. In the Dedication to Prince Posterity, the different methods of tyranny and destruction which the prince's governor, Time, employs in putting out of existence the productions of the common authors of the day are thus described:—"His inveterate

malice is such to the writings of our age, that, of several thousands produced yearly from this renowned city, before the next revolution of the sun there is not one to be heard of: unhappy infants! many of them barbarously destroyed before they have so much as learned their mother-tongue to beg for pity. Some he stifles in their cradles: others he frights into convulsions, whereof they suddenly die; some he flays alive; others he tears limb from limb. Great numbers are offered to Moloch; and the rest, tainted by his breath, die of a languishing consumption." How powerfully are the extemporaneous preacher and his hearers depicted in the great chapter on the renowned sect of the Aeolists (or pretenders to immediate inspiration) founded by Jack:—"The wind, in breaking forth, deals with his face as it does with that of the sea, first blackening, then wrinkling, and at last bursting it into a foam. It is in this guise the sacred Aeolist delivers his oracular belches to his panting disciples, of whom some are greedily gaping after the sanctified breath; others are all the while hymning out the praises of the winds; and gently wafted to and fro by their own humming, do thus represent the soft breezes of their deities appeased." In the next chapter—"A digression concerning the original, the use, and improvement of Madness in a Commonwealth"—the eloquence flows throughout in a full and rapid stream, rising at times to a height not unworthy of Bacon or Taylor. Here is a single sentence:—"How fading and insipid do all objects accost us that are not conveyed in the vehicle of delusion! how shrunk is everything as it appears in the glass of nature! so that, if it were not for the assistance of artificial mediums, false lights, refracted angles, varnish and tinsel, there would be a mighty level in the felicity and enjoyments of mortal men." When he wrote this, indeed, Swift, must have been thinking of Bacon, or fresh from the reading of the passage in his Essay on Truth, in which he says, "This same truth is a naked and open daylight, that doth not show the masks, and mummeries, and triumphs of the world half so stately and daintily as candlelights. . . . . A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt, that, if there were taken out of men's minds vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds of a number of men poor shrunken things, full of melancholy and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves?" Swift, with the phraseology of this passage apparently running in his head, goes on to con-

demn the so-called wisdom which consists in *unmasking*; concluding his argument as follows: "Whatever philosopher or projector can find out an art to solder and patch up the flaws and imperfections of nature, will deserve much better of mankind, and teach us a more useful science, than that so much in present esteem, of widening and exposing them, like him who held anatomy to be the ultimate end of physic. And he whose fortunes and dispositions have placed him in a convenient station to enjoy the fruits of this noble art; he that can, with Epicurus, content his ideas with the films and images that fly off upon his senses from the superficies of things; such a man, truly wise, creams off nature, leaving the sour and the dregs for philosophy and reason to lap up. This is the sublime and refined point of felicity, called the possession of being well deceived; the serene, peaceful state of being a fool among knaves." We will take our leave of the Tale of a Tub with the transcription of one sentence more from the next chapter: "I have a strong inclination," exclaims our half-jesting, half-serious author, "before I leave the world, to taste a blessing which we mysterious writers can seldom reach till we have gotten into our graves; whether it be that fame, being a fruit grafted on the body, can hardly grow, and much less ripen, till the stock is in the earth; or whether she be a bird of prey, and is lured, among the rest, to pursue after the scent of a carcase; or whether she conceives her trumpet sounds best and farthest when she stands on a tomb, by the advantage of a rising ground and the echo of a hollow vault."

Of the Battle of the Books we can only afford to give the concluding section, entitled The Episode of Bentley and Wotton, the latter portion of which in particular is a very happy Homeric burlesque:—

"Day being far spent, and the numerous forces of the moderns half inclining to a retreat, there issued forth from a squadron of their heavy-armed foot a captain, whose name was Bentley, the most deformed of all the moderns; tall, but without shape or comeliness; large, but without strength or proportion. His armour was patched up of a thousand incoherent pieces; and the sound of it as he marched was loud and dry, like that made by the fall of a sheet of lead, which an Etesian wind blows suddenly down from the roof of some steeple. His helmet was of old rusty iron, but the vizor was brass, which, tainted by his breath, corrupted into copperas, nor wanted gall from the same fountain; so that, whenever provoked by anger or labour, an atramentous quality, of most malignant nature, was seen to distil from his lips. . . . . Completely

armed,[1] he advanced with a slow and heavy pace where the modern chiefs were holding a consult upon the sum of things; who, as he came onwards, laughed to behold his crooked leg and humped shoulder, which his boot and armour, vainly endeavouring to hide, were forced to comply with and expose. The generals made use of him for his talent of railing; which, kept within government, proved frequently of great service to their cause, but at other times did more mischief than good; for, at the least touch of offence, and often without any at all, he would, like a wounded elephant, convert it against his leaders. Such, at this juncture, was the disposition of Bentley; grieved to see the enemy prevail, and dissatisfied with every body's conduct but his own. He humbly gave the modern generals to understand that he conceived, with great submission, they were all a pack of rogues, and fools, and d——d cowards, and confounded loggerheads, and illiterate whelps, and nonsensical scoundrels; that, if himself had been constituted general, those presumptuous dogs, the ancients, would long before this have been beaten out of the field. You, said he, sit here idle; but, when I, or any other valiant modern, kill an enemy, you are sure to seize the spoil. But I will not march one foot against the foe till you all swear to me that, whomever I take or kill, his arms I shall quietly possess. Bentley having spoken thus, Scaliger, bestowing him a sour look, Miscreant prater! said he, eloquent only in thine own eyes, thou railest without wit, or truth, or discretion. The malignity of thy temper perverteth nature; thy learning makes thee more barbarous; thy study of humanity[2] more inhuman; thy converse among poets, more grovelling, miry, and dull. All arts of civilizing others render thee rude and untractable; courts have taught thee ill manners, and polite conversation has finished thee a pedant. Besides, a greater coward burdeneth not the army. But never despond: I pass my word, whatever spoil thou takest shall certainly be thy own: though I hope that vile carcase will first become a prey to kites and worms.

Bentley durst not reply; but, half choked with spleen and rage, withdrew in full resolution of performing some great achievement. With him, for his aid and companion, he took his beloved Wotton; resolving by policy or surprise to attempt some neglected quarter of the ancients' army. They began their march over carcases of their slaughtered friends; then to the right of their own forces; then wheeled northward, till they came to Aldrovandus's tomb, which they passed on the side of the declining sun. And now they arrived, with fear, toward the enemy's outguards; looking about if haply they might spy the quarters of the wounded, or some straggling sleepers, unarmed and apart from the rest. As when two mongrel curs, whom native greediness and domestic want provoke and join in partnership, though fearful, nightly to invade the folds of some rich grazier, they, with tails depressed and lolling tongues, creep soft and slow;

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[1] He is represented as grasping a flail in his right hand, and a vessel full of filth in his left.

[2] The Literæ Humaniores.

meanwhile the conscious moon, now in her zenith, on their guilty heads darts perpendicular rays; nor dare they bark, though much provoked at her refulgent visage, whether seen in puddle by reflection or in sphere direct; but one surveys the region round, while the other scouts the plain, if haply to discover, at distance from the flock, some carcase half-devoured, the refuse of gorged wolves or ominous ravens. So marched this lovely, loving pair of friends, nor with less fear and circumspection; when at a distance they might perceive two shining suits of armour hanging upon an oak, and the owners not far off in a profound sleep. The two friends drew lots, and the pursuing this adventure fell to Bentley; on he went, and in his van Confusion and Amaze, while Horror and Affright brought up the rear. As he came near, behold two heroes of the ancients' army, Phalaris and Aesop, lay fast asleep; Bentley would fain have dispatched them both, and, stealing close, aimed his flail at Phalaris's breast. But then the goddess Affright, interposing, caught the modern in her icy arms, and dragged him from the danger she foresaw; both the dormant heroes happened to turn at the same instant, though soundly sleeping and busy in a dream. For Phalaris was just that minute dreaming how a most vile poetaster had lampooned him, and how he had got him roaring in his bull. And Aesop dreamed that, as he and the ancient chiefs were lying on the ground, a wild ass, broke loose, ran about trampling and kicking... in their faces. Bentley, leaving the two heroes asleep, seized on both their armours, and withdrew in quest of his darling Wotton.

He, in the meantime, had wandered long in search of some enterprise, till at length he arrived at a small rivulet that issued from a fountain hard by, called, in the language of mortal men, Helicon. Here he stopped, and, parched with thirst, resolved to allay it in this limpid stream. Thrice, with profane hands, he essayed to raise the water to his lips, and thrice it slipped all through his fingers. Then he stooped prone on his breast, but, ere his mouth had kissed the liquid crystal, Apollo came, and in the channel held his shield betwixt the modern and the fountain, so that he drew up nothing but mud. For, although no fountain on earth can compare with the clearness of Helicon, yet there lies at bottom a thick sediment of slime and mud; for so Apollo begged of Jupiter, as a punishment to those who durst attempt to taste it with unhallowed lips, and for a lesson to all not to draw too deep or far from the spring.

At the fountain-head Wotton discerned two heroes; the one he could not distinguish, but the other was soon known for Temple, general of the allies to the ancients. His back was turned, and he was employed in drinking large draughts in his helmet from the fountain, where he had withdrawn himself to rest from the toils of the war. Wotton, observing him, with quaking knees and trembling hands, spoke thus to himself: O that I could kill this destroyer of our army! What renown should I purchase among the chiefs! But to issue out against him, man against man, shield against shield, and lance against lance, what modern of us dare? For he fights like a god, and Pallas or Apollo are ever at his elbow. But, O mother! if what Fame reports be true, that I am the son

of so great a goddess,[1] grant me to hit Temple with this lance, that the stroke may send him to hell, and that I may return in safety and triumph, laden with his spoils. The first part of this prayer the gods granted at the intercession of his mother and of Momus; but the rest, by a perverse wind sent from Fate, was scattered in the air. Then Wotton grasped his lance, and, brandishing it thrice over his head, darted it with all his might, the goddess his mother at the same time adding strength to his arm. Away the lance went whizzing, and reached even to the belt of the averted ancient, upon whom lightly grazing it fell to the ground.[2] Temple neither felt the weapon touch him nor heard it fall; and Wotton might have escaped to his army, with the honour of having remitted his lance against so great a leader unrevenged; but Apollo, enraged that a javelin flung by the assistance of so foul a goddess should pollute his fountain, put on the shape of ———, and softly came to young Boyle, who then accompanied Temple. He pointed first to the lance, then to the distant modern that flung it, and commanded the young hero to take immediate revenge. Boyle, clad in a suit of armour which had been given him by all the gods, immediately advanced against the trembling foe, who now fled before him. As a young lion in the Libyan plains or Araby Desert, sent by his aged sire to hunt for prey, or health, or exercise, he scours along, wishing to meet some tiger from the mountains or a furious boar: if chance a wild ass, with brayings importune, affronts his ear, the generous beast, though loathing to distain his claws with blood so vile, yet much provoked at the offensive noise, which Echo, foolish nymph, like her ill-judging sex, repeats much louder, and with more delight, than Philomela's song, he vindicates the honour of the forest, and hunts the noisy long-eared animal. So Wotton fled, so Boyle pursued. But Wotton, heavy-armed and slow of foot, began to slack his course, when his lover Bentley appeared, returning laden with the spoils of the two sleeping ancients. Boyle observed

[1] Wotton is represented as the son of a malignant deity, called Criticism, by an unknown father of mortal race. "She dwelt," we are told, "on the top of a snowy mountain in Nova Zembla; there Momus found her extended in her den upon the spoils of numberless volumes half devoured. At her right hand sat Ignorance, her father and husband, blind with age; at her left Pride, her mother, dressing her up in the scraps of paper herself had torn. There was Opinion, her sister, light of foot, hoodwinked, and headstrong, yet giddy and perpetually turning. About her played her children, Noise and Impudence, Dulness and Vanity, Positiveness, Pedantry, and Ill-Manners. The goddess herself had claws like a cat; her head, and ears, and voice resembled those of an ass; her teeth fallen out before; her eyes turned inward, as if she looked only upon herself; her diet was the overflowing of her own gall; her spleen was so large as to stand prominent, like a dug of the first rate; nor wanted excrescences in form of teats, at which a crew of ugly monsters were greedily sucking; and, what is wonderful to conceive, the bulk of spleen increased faster than the sucking could diminish it."

[2] This may be understood as an admission that Temple was mistaken on the point of the authenticity of the Epistles of Phalaris, though the matter is represented as of no moment in reference to the great question at issue.

him well, and, soon discovering the helmet and shield of Phalaris, his friend, both which he had lately with his own hands new polished and gilt, rage sparkled in his eyes, and, leaving the pursuit after Wotton, he furiously rushed on against this new approacher. Fain would he be revenged on both; but both now fled different ways; and, as a woman in a little house that gets a painful livelihood by spinning, if chance her geese be scattered o'er the common, she courses round the plain from side to side, compelling here and there the stragglers to the flock; they cackle loud, and flutter o'er the champaign; so Boyle pursued, so fled this pair of friends: finding at length their flight was vain, they bravely joined and drew themselves in phalanx. First Bentley threw a spear with all his force, hoping to pierce the enemy's breast; but Pallas came unseen, and in the air took off the point and clapped on one of lead, which, after a dead bang against the enemy's shield, fell blunted to the ground. Then Boyle, observing well his time, took up a lance of wondrous length and sharpness; and, as this pair of friends, compacted, stood close side to side, he wheeled him to the right, and, with unusual force, darted the weapon. Bentley saw his fate approach, and, flanking down his arms close to his sides, hoping to save his body, in went the point, passing through arm and side, nor stopped or spent its force till it had also pierced the valiant Wotton, who, going to sustain his dying friend, shared his fate. As when a skilful cook has trussed a brace of woodcocks, he with iron skewer pierces the tender sides of both, their legs and wings close pinioned to the ribs; so was this pair of friends transfixed, till down they fell, joined in their lives, joined in their deaths: so closely joined that Charon would mistake them both for one, and waft them over Styx for half his fare. Farewell, beloved, loving pair; few equals have you left behind; and happy and immortal shall you be, if all my wit and eloquence can make you.

Swift was undoubtedly the most masculine intellect of his age, the most earnest thinker of a time in which there was less among us of earnest and deep thinking than in any other era of our literature. In its later and more matured form, his wit itself becomes earnest and passionate, and has a severity, a fierceness, a *sæva indignatio*, that are all his own, and that have never been blended in any other writer with so keen a perception of the ludicrous and so much general comic power. The breath of his rich, pungent, original jocularity is at the same time cutting as a sword and consuming as fire. Other masters of the same art are satisfied if they can only made their readers laugh; this is their main, often their sole aim: with Swift, to excite the emotion of the ludicrous is, in most of his writings, only a subordinate purpose,—a means employed for effecting quite another and a much higher end; if he labours to make anything ridiculous, it is because he hates it, and would have it trodden into the earth or extirpated. This,

at least, became the settled temper of all the middle and latter portion of his life. No sneaking kindness for his victim is to be detected in his crucifying raillery; he is not a mere admirer of the comic picturesque, who will sometimes rack or gibbet an unhappy individual for the sake of the fantastic grimaces he may make, or the capers he may cut in the air; he has the true spirit of an executioner, and only loves his joke as sauce and seasoning to more serious work. Few men have been more perversely prejudiced and self-willed than Swift, and therefore of absolute truth his works may probably contain less than many others not so earnestly written; but of what was truth to the mind of the writer, of what he actually believed and desired, no works contain more. Here, again, as well as in the other respect noticed some pages back, Swift is in the middle class of writers; far above those whose whole truth is truth of expression—that is, correspondence between the words and the thoughts (possibly without any between the thoughts and the writer's belief); but below those who both write what they think, and whose thoughts are pre-eminently valuable for their intrinsic beauty or profoundness. Yet in setting honestly and effectively before us even his own passions and prejudices a writer also tells us the truth—the truth, at least, respecting himself, if not respecting anything else. This much Swift does always; and this is his great distinction among the masters of wit and humour;—the merriest of his jests is an utterance of some real feeling of his heart at the moment, as much as the fiercest of his invectives. Alas! with all his jesting and merriment, he did not know what it was to have a mind at ease, or free from the burden and torment of dark, devouring passions, till, in his own words, the cruel indignation that tore continually at his heart was laid at rest in the grave. In truth, the insanity which ultimately fell down upon and laid prostrate his fine faculties had cast something of its black shadow athwart their vision from the first—as he himself probably felt or suspected when he determined to bequeath his fortune to build an hospital in his native country for persons afflicted with that calamity; and sad enough, we may be sure, he was at heart, when he gaily wrote that he did so merely

> To show, by one satiric touch,
> No nation wanted it so much.*

* "I have often" says Lord Orrery, "heard him lament the state of childhood and idiotism to which some of the greatest men of this nation were

Yet the madness, or predisposition to madness, was also part and parcel of the man, and possibly an element of his genius—which might have had less earnestness and force, as well as less activity, productiveness, and originality, if it had not been excited and impelled by that perilous fervour. Nay, something of their power and peculiar character Swift's writings may owe to the exertions called forth in curbing and keeping down the demon which, like a proud steed under a stout rider, would have mastered him, if he had not mastered it, and, although support and strength to him so long as it was held in subjection, would, dominant over him, have rent him in pieces, as in the end it did. Few could have maintained the struggle so toughly and so long.

Swift's later style cannot be better illustrated than by a few passages from his famous series of Letters, written in 1724, under the signature of M. B., Drapier, against Wood's halfpence and farthings. Wood was an extensive proprietor of iron works in Staffordshire, who had obtained a patent for coining copper money to the extent of 108,000*l.* sterling, to circulate in Ireland, where the want of such small coin for change was confessedly much felt and had been long complained of. It is difficult to get at what were really the facts of the matter; very plausible explanations and answers were produced by Wood and the government upon the various points as to which the project was attacked; and there was undoubtedly much exaggeration in many of Swift's representations. But the circumstances were by no means free from suspicion. Swift, in his second Letter, sums up his leading objections in a short statement, which he proposed should be circulated for signature throughout the country, to the following purport:—"Whereas one William Wood, hardwareman, now or lately sojourning in the City of London, has, by many misrepresentations, procured a grant for coining 108,000*l.* in copper halfpence for this kingdom, which is a sum five times greater than our occasions require; and whereas it is notorious that the said Wood has coined his halfpence of such base metal and false weight that they are at least six times in seven below the real value; and whereas we have reason to apprehend that

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reduced before their death. He mentioned, as examples within his own time, the Duke of Marlborough and Lord Somers; and, when he cited these melancholy instances, it was always with a heavy sigh, and with gestures that showed great uneasiness, as if he felt an impulse of what was to happen to him before he died."—Remarks, p. 188.

the said Wood may at any time hereafter clandestinely coin as many more halfpence as he pleases; and whereas the said patent neither does nor can oblige his majesty's subjects to receive the said halfpence in any payment, but leaves it to their voluntary choice, because by law the subject cannot be obliged to take any money except gold or silver; and whereas, contrary to the letter and meaning of the said patent, the said Wood has declared that every person shall be obliged to take $5\frac{1}{2}d.$ of his coin in every payment; and whereas the House of Commons and Privy Council have severally addressed his most sacred Majesty, representing the ill consequences which the said coinage may have upon this kingdom; and, lastly, whereas it is universally agreed that the whole nation to a man (except Mr. Wood and his confederates) are in the utmost apprehensions of the ruinous consequences that must follow from the said coinage; therefore we whose names are underwritten, being persons of considerable estates in this kingdom, do unanimously resolve and declare that we will never receive one farthing or halfpenny of the said Wood's coining, and that we will direct all our tenants to refuse the said coin from any person whatsoever." Some of these allegations, certainly, were never very well made out. That about the lightness of the pieces and the base quality of the metal, in particular, seems to have been without foundation, in so far at least as regarded the portion of the coinage actually fabricated. But, on the other hand, some facts and surmises, which could not be so openly stated, had a large share in exciting the public indignation. It was believed that the profits of the patent were to be shared by Wood with the royal mistress, the Duchess of Munster (or Countess of Kendal, as she was commonly called in England), by whose influence it had been obtained; and various irritating expressions, in regard to the attempt made to defeat the project, were attributed not only to Wood himself, but also to Walpole, the minister, and other persons high in authority and power in England. Feelings and principles thus came to be involved in the contest, going far beyond the mere economical and material considerations that appeared on the surface. The stand was felt to be for the dignity and liberties of the nation; and Swift was universally regarded by his countrymen as the champion of the independence of Ireland—the preserver of whatever they had most to value or to be proud of as a people. And perhaps, the birth of political and patriotic spirit in Ireland as a general sen-

timent, may be traced with some truth to this affair of Wood's halfpence and to these letters of Swift's. No agitation that has since been got up in that country has been so immediately and completely successful. The whole power of the English government was found ineffectual to cope with the opposition that had been aroused and marshalled by one man; and Wood soon found there was nothing for him but to resign his patent. No other of Swift's writings brought him anything like the fame and influence that he acquired by his Drapier's Letters. At first pains were taken to conceal the authorship, and for a short time, it would appear, successfully. It was desirable to withhold at any rate such legal proof as might have enabled the government to lay their hands upon him. A proclamation was early issued, offering a reward of 300*l.* for the discovery of the writer; but, after the printer had been indicted for some passages in the fourth letter, and the grand jury had thrown out the bill, concealment was probably no longer attempted; and even from the first it must have been generally suspected, as soon as people began to speculate on the matter, that the Drapier could be nobody but Swift. From this date to the end of his life, or at least till the extinction of his faculties, Swift, or the Dean, as he was universally called, continued to be the most popular and most powerful individual in Ireland, his voice, in Dublin at least, being in every election, or other occasion on which the citizens had any public part to act, obeyed like the fiat of an oracle. That warm-hearted race are not apt to forget their benefactors, or to change their idols; but neither did Swift abuse his ascendancy; he never sought to turn his popularity to account in the promotion of any private interest or object: he asked nothing for himself from any government; he never obtained any higher preferment, but lived and died Dean of St. Patrick's, and nothing more. As for the Letters themselves, much forgotten as they are now, they have been described as the most Demosthenic compositions since the time of Demosthenes; and it would perhaps be difficult to produce any modern writing in which the most remarkable qualities of the old Greek orator are so happily exemplified—his force, his rapidity, his directness, his alertness and dexterity, his luminousness of statement and apparent homeliness or plainness, the naturalness and at the same time aptness of his figures, his wonderful logic (whether for fair reasoning or sophistry and misrepresentation), his ever-present life and power of interesting, his

occasional fire and passion, his bursts of scorn, indignation, and withering invective, and the other resources of his supreme art. The measure, such as it is, in which all this is found in Swift can only, however, of course, be fully gathered from the entire Letters.

The following passages are from the second Letter:—

But your newsletter says that an assay was made of the coin. How impudent and insupportable is this! Wood takes care to coin a dozen or two halfpence of good metal, sends them to the Tower, and they are approved; and these must answer all that he has already coined or shall coin for the future. It is true, indeed, that a gentleman often sends to my shop for a pattern of stuff; I cut it fairly off, and, if he likes it, he comes or sends, and compares the pattern with the whole piece, and probably we come to a bargain. But if I were to buy a hundred sheep, andthe grazier should bring me one single wether, fat and well fleeced, by way of pattern, and expect the same price round for the whole hundred, without suffering me to see them before he was paid, or giving me good security to restore my money for those that were lean, or shorn, or scabby, I would be none of his customers. I have heard of a man who had a mind to sell his house, and therefore carried a piece of brick in his pocket, which he showed as a pattern to encourage customers; and this is directly the case in point with Mr. Wood's assay. . . . . .

The paragraph concludes thus: "N.B." (that is to say, *nota bene* or *mark* well) "No evidence appeared from Ireland, or elsewhere, to prove the mischiefs complained of, or any abuses whatsoever committed, in the execution of the said grant."

The impudence of this remark exceeds all that went before. First, the House of Commons in Ireland, which represents the whole people of the kingdom, and, secondly, the Privy Council, addressed his Majesty against these halfpence. What could be done more to express the universal sense of the nation? If his copper were diamonds, and the kingdom were entirely against it, would not that be sufficient to reject it? Must a committee of the whole House of Commons, and our whole Privy Council, go over to argue *pro* and *con* with Mr. Wood? To what end did the king give his patent for coining halfpence for Ireland? Was it not because it was represented to his sacred Majesty that such a coinage would be of advantage to the good of this kingdom, and of all his subjects here? It is to the patentee's peril if this representation be false, and the execution of his patent be fraudulent and corrupt. Is he so wicked and foolish to think that his patent was given him to ruin a million and a half of people, that he might be a gainer of three or four score thousand pounds to himself? Before he was at the charge of passing a patent, much more of raking up so much filthy dross, and stamping it with his Majesty's image and superscription, should he not first, in common sense, in common equity, and common manners, have consulted the principal party concerned—that is to say, the people of the kingdom, the House of Lords or Commons, or the

Privy Council? If any foreigner should ask us whose image or superscription there is on Wood's coin, we should be ashamed to tell him it was Cæsar's. In that great want of copper halfpence which he alleges we were, our city set up Cæsar's statue in excellent copper, at an expense that is equal in value to thirty thousand pounds of his coin, and we will not receive his image in worse metal. . . . . .

Although my letter be directed to you, Mr. Harding [the printer], yet I intend it for all my countrymen. I have no interest in this affair but what is common to the public. I can live better than many others; I have some gold and silver by me, and a shop well furnished; and shall be able to make a shift when many of my betters are starving. But I am grieved to see the coldness and indifference of many people with whom I discourse. Some are afraid of a proclamation; others shrug up their shoulders and cry, "What would you have us to do?" Some give out there is no danger at all; others are comforted that it will be a common calamity, and they shall fare no worse than their neighbours. Will a man who hears midnight robbers at his door get out of bed and raise his family for a common defence; and shall a whole kingdom lie in a lethargy, while Mr. Wood comes, at the head of his confederates, to rob them of all they have, to ruin us and our posterity for ever? If a highwayman meets you on the road, you give him your money to save your life; but, God be thanked, Mr. Wood cannot touch a hair of your heads. You have all the laws of God and man on your side; when he or his accomplices offer you his dross, it is but saying no, and you are safe. If a madman should come into my shop with a handful of dirt raked out of the kennel, and offer it in payment for ten yards of stuff, I would pity or laugh at him; or, if his behaviour deserved it, kick him out of my doors. And, if Mr. Wood comes to demand my gold and silver, or commodities for which I have paid my gold and silver, in exchange for his trash, can he deserve or expect better treatment?

The following is the winding-up of Letter Third:—

I am very sensible that such a work as I have undertaken might have worthily employed a much better pen: but, when a house is attempted to be robbed, it often happens the weakest in the family runs first to stop the door. All the assistance I had were some informations from an eminent person; whereof I am afraid I have spoiled a few, by endeavouring to make them of a piece with my own productions, and the rest I was not able to manage: I was in the case of David, who could not move in the armour of Saul, and therefore I rather chose to attack this uncircumcised Philistine (Wood, I mean) with a sling and a stone. And I may say, for Wood's honour as well as my own, that he resembles Goliath in many circumstances very applicable to the present purpose; for Goliath had "a helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass; and he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders." In short, he was, like Mr. Wood, all over brass, and he defied the armies of

the living God. Goliath's conditions of combat were likewise the same with those of Wood: "if he prevail against us, then shall we be his servants." But, if it happens that I prevail over him, I renounce the other part of the condition: he shall never be a servant of mine; for I do not think him fit to be trusted in any honest man's shop.

We can only give in addition a few short paragraphs from Letter Fourth:—

It is true, indeed, that within the memory of man the parliaments of England have sometimes assumed the power of binding this kingdom by laws enacted there: wherein they were at first openly opposed (as far as truth, reason, and justice are capable of opposing) by the famous Mr. Molyneux, an English gentleman born here, as well as by several of the greatest patriots and best Whigs in England; but the love and torrent of power prevailed. Indeed, the arguments on both sides were invincible. For, in reason, all government without the consent of the governed is the very definition of slavery; but, in fact, eleven men well armed will certainly subdue one single man in his shirt. But I have done; for those who have used power to cramp liberty have gone so far as to resent even the liberty of complaining; although a man upon the rack was never known to be refused the liberty of roaring as loud as he thought fit.

And, as we are apt to sink too much under unreasonable fears, so we are too soon inclined to be raised by groundless hopes, according to the nature of all consumptive bodies like ours. Thus, it has been given about for several days past that somebody in England empowered a second somebody to write to a third somebody here to assure us that we should no more be troubled with these halfpence. And this is reported to have been done by the same person[1] who is said to have sworn some months ago "that he would ram them down our throats," though I doubt they would stick in our stomachs; but, whichever of these reports be true or false, it is no concern of ours. For in this point we have nothing to do with English ministers, and I should be sorry to leave it in their power to redress this grievance or to enforce it, for the report of the Committee[2] has given me a surfeit. The remedy is wholly in your own hands, and therefore I have digressed a little in order to refresh and continue that spirit so seasonably raised among you, and to let you see, that, by the laws of GOD, of NATURE, of NATIONS, and of your COUNTRY, you ARE and OUGHT to be as FREE a people as your brethren in England. . . . . .

Before I conclude, I must beg leave in all humility to tell Mr. Wood, that he is guilty of great indiscretion, by causing so honourable a name as that of Mr. Walpole to be mentioned so often and in such a manner upon this occasion. A short paper printed at Bristol, and reprinted here, reports

[1] Walpole.

[2] A committee of the English Privy Council to whom the matter had been referred.

Mr. Wood to say "that he wonders at the impudence and insolence of the Irish in refusing his coin, and what he will do when Mr. Walpole comes to town." Where, by the way, he is mistaken; for it is the true English people of Ireland who refuse it, although we take it for granted that the Irish will do so too whenever they are asked. In another printed paper of his contriving it is roundly expressed, "that Mr. Walpole will cram his brass down our throats." Sometimes it is given out "that we must either take those halfpence or eat our brogues;" and in another newsletter, but of yesterday, we read, "that the same great man has sworn to make us swallow his coin in fire-balls."

This brings to my mind the known story of a Scotchman, who, receiving the sentence of death with all the circumstances of hanging, beheading, quartering, embowelling, and the like, cried out, "What need all this COOKERY?" And I think we have reason to ask the same question; for, if we believe Wood, here is a dinner getting ready for us, and you see the bill of fare; and I am sorry the drink was forgot, which might easily be supplied with melted lead and flaming pitch.

What vile words are these to put into the mouth of a great counsellor, in high trust with his Majesty and looked upon as a prime minister? If Mr. Wood has no better a manner of representing his patrons, when I come to be a great man he shall never be suffered to attend at my levee. This is not the style of a great minister: it savours too much of the kettle and the furnace, and came entirely out of Wood's forge.

As for the threat of making us eat our brogues, we need not be in pain; for, if his coin should pass, that unpolite covering for the feet would no longer be a national reproach; because then we should have neither shoe nor brogue left in the kingdom. But here the falsehood of Mr. Wood is fairly detected: for I am confident Mr. Walpole never heard of a brogue in his whole life.

As to "swallowing these halfpence in fireballs," it is a story equally improbable. For, to execute this operation, the whole stock of Mr. Wood's coin and metal must be melted down, and moulded into hollow balls, with wildfire, no bigger than a reasonable throat may be able to swallow. Now, the metal he has prepared, and already coined, will amount to at least fifty millions of halfpence, to be swallowed by a million and a half of people; so that allowing two halfpence to each ball, there will be about seventeen balls of wildfire apiece to be swallowed by every person in the kingdom; and, to administer this dose, there cannot be conveniently fewer than fifty thousand operators, allowing one operator to every thirty; which, considering the squeamishness of some stomachs, and the peevishness of young children, is but reasonable. Now, under correction of better judgments, I think the trouble and charge of such an experiment would exceed the profit; and therefore I take this report to be spurious, or at least only a new scheme of Mr. Wood himself; which, to make it pass the better in Ireland, he would father upon a minister of state.

But I will now demonstrate beyond all contradiction that Mr. Walpole is against this project of Mr. Wood, and is an entire friend to Ireland, only by

this one invincible argument: that he has the universal opinion of being a wise man, an able minister, and in all his proceedings pursuing the true interest of the king his master: and that, as his integrity is above all corruption, so is his fortune above all temptation. I reckon, therefore, we are perfectly safe from that corner, and shall never be under the necessity of contending with so formidable a power, but be left to possess our brogues and potatoes in peace,—as remote from thunder as we are from Jupiter.[1]

Swift would probably have enjoyed a higher reputation as a poet if he had not been so great a writer in prose. His productions in verse are considerable in point of quantity, and many of them admirable of their kind. But those of them that deserve to be so described belong to the humblest kind of poetry—to that kind which has scarcely any distinctively poetical quality or characteristic about it except the rhyme. He has made some attempts in a higher style, but with little success. His Pindaric Odes, written and published when he was a young man, drew from Dryden (who was his relation) the emphatic judgment, "Cousin Swift, you will never be a poet:" and, though Swift, never forgave this frankness, he seems to have felt that the prognostication was a sound one, for he wrote no more Pindaric Odes. Nor indeed did he ever afterwards attempt anything considerable in the way of serious poetry, if we except his Cadenus and Vanessa (the story of Miss Vanhomrigh), his effusion entitled Poetry, a Rhapsody, and that on his own death —and even these are chiefly distinguished from his other productions by being longer and more elaborate, the most elevated portions of the first mentioned scarcely rising above narrative and reflection, and whatever there is of more dignified or solemn writing in the two others being largely intermixed with comedy and satire in his usual easy ambling style. With all his liveliness of fancy, he had no grandeur of imagination, as little feeling of the purely graceful or beautiful, no capacity of tender emotion, no sensibility to even the simplest forms of music. With these deficiencies it was impossible that he should produce anything that could be called poetical in a high sense. But of course he could put his wit and fancy into the form of verse—and so as to make the measured expression and the rhyme give additional point and piquancy to his strokes of satire and ludicrous narratives or descriptions. Some of his lighter verses are as good as

[1] In allusion to the Latin proverb, *Procul a Jove, procul a fulmine.*

anything of the kind in the language. As a specimen we will give one which is less known than some others that might be quoted, one of the many rattling volleys of rhyme by which he aided the heavier artillery of his Drapier's Letters, a eulogy on Archbishop King, who gained great applause by taking the popular side on that occasion, under the title of An excellent New Song, upon his Grace our Good Lord Archbishop of Dublin; By Honest Jo, one of his Grace's Farmers in Fingal:—

I sing not of the Drapier's praise, nor yet of William Wood,
But I sing of a famous lord, who seeks his country's good;
Lord William's grace of Dublin town, 'tis he that first appears,
Whose wisdom and whose piety do far exceed his years.[1]
In every council and debate he stands for what is right,
And still the truth he will maintain, whate'er he loses by 't.
And, though some think him in the wrong, yet still there comes a season
When every one turns round about, and owns his grace had reason.
His firmness to the public good, as one that knows it swore,
Has lost his grace for ten years past ten thousand pounds and more.
Then come the poor and strip him so, they leave him not a cross,
For he regards ten thousand pounds no more than Woods's dross.
To beg his favour is the way new favours still to win;
He makes no more to give ten pounds than I to give a pin.
Why, there 's my landlord, now, the squire, who all in money wallows,
He would not give a groat to save his father from the gallows.
"A bishop," says the noble squire, "I hate the very name,
To have two thousand pounds a year—O 'tis a burning shame!
Two thousand pounds a year! Good lord! and I to have but five!"
And under him no tenant yet was ever known to thrive:
Now from his lordship's grace I hold a little piece of ground,
And all the rent I pay is scarce five shillings in the pound.
Then master steward takes my rent, and tells me, "Honest Jo,
Come, you must take a cup of sack or two before you go."
He bids me then to hold my tongue, and up the money locks,
For fear my lord should send it all into the poor man's box.
And once I was so bold to beg that I might see his grace,—
Good lord! I wonder how I dared to look him in the face:
Then down I went upon my knees his blessing to obtain;
He gave it me, and ever since I find I thrive amain.
"Then," said my lord, "I 'm very glad to see thee, honest friend;
I know the times are something hard, but hope they soon will mend:
Pray never press yourself for rent, but pay me when you can;
I find you bear a good report, and are an honest man."

[1] He was at this time seventy-four.

Then said his lordship with a smile, "I must have lawful cash;
I hope you will not pay my rent in that same Woods's trash."
"God bless your grace!" I then replied, "I 'd see him hanging higher,
Before I 'd touch his filthy dross, than is Clandalkin spire.
To every farmer twice a week all round about the Yoke,
Our parsons read the Drapier's books, and make us honest folk."
And then I went to pay the squire, and in the way I found
His baillie driving all my cows into the parish pound:
"Why, sirrah," said the noble squire, "how dare you see my face?
Your rent is due almost a week, beside the days of grace."
And yet the land I from him hold is set so on the rack,
That only for the bishop's lease 'twould quickly break my back.
Then God preserve his lordship's grace, and make him live as long
As did Methusalem of old, and so I end my song.

Pope.

Of Swift's contemporaries, by far the most memorable name is that of Alexander Pope. If Swift was at the head of the prose writers of the early part of the last century, Pope was as incontestably the first of the writers in verse of that day, with no other either equal or second to him. Born a few months before the Revolution, he came forth as a poet, by the publication of his Pastorals in Tonson's Miscellany in 1709, when he was yet only in his twenty-first year; and they had been written five years before. Nor were they the earliest of his performances; his Ode on Solitude, his verses upon Silence, his translations of the First Book of the Thebais and of Ovid's Epistle from Sappho to Phaon, and his much more remarkable paraphrases of Chaucer's January and May and the Prologue to the Wife of Bath's Tale, all preceded the composition of the Pastorals. His Essay on Criticism (written in 1709) was published in 1711; the Messiah the same year (in the Spectator); the Rape of the Lock in 1712; the Temple of Fame (written two years before) the same year; his Windsor Forest (which he had commenced at sixteen) in 1713; the first four books of his translation of the Iliad in 1715; his Epistle from Eloisa to Abelard (written some years before) we believe in 1717, when he published a collected edition of his poems; the remaining portions of the Iliad at different times, the last in 1720; his translation of the Odyssey (in concert with

Fenton and Broome) in 1725; the first three books of the Dunciad in 1728; his Essay on Man in 1733 and 1734; his Imitations of Horace, various other satirical pieces, the Prologue and Epilogue to the Satires, his four epistles styled Moral Essays, and his modernised version of Donne's Satires between 1730 and 1740; and the fourth book of the Dunciad in 1742. Besides all this verse, collections of his Letters were published, first surreptitiously by Curl, and then by himself in 1737; and, among other publications in prose, his clever *jeu d'esprit* entitled a Narrative of the Frenzy of John Dennis appeared in 1713; his Preface to Shakespeare, with his edition of the works of that poet, in 1721; his Treatise of the Bathos, or Art of Sinking in Poetry, and his Memoirs of P. P., Clerk of This Parish (in ridicule of Burnet's History of his Own Time), in 1727. He died in May, 1744, about a year and a half before his friend Swift, who, more than twenty years his senior, had naturally anticipated that he should be the first to depart, and that, as he cynically, and yet touchingly too, expressed it, while Arbuthnot grieved for him a day, and Gay a week, he should be lamented a whole month by "poor Pope,"—whom, of all those he best knew, he seems to have the most loved.

Pope, with talent enough for anything, might deserve to be ranked among the most distinguished prose writers of his time, if he were not its greatest poet; but it is in the latter character that he falls to be noticed in the history of our literature. And what a broad and bright region would be cut off from our poetry if he had never lived! If we even confine ourselves to his own works, without regarding the numerous subsequent writers who have formed themselves upon him as an example and model, and may be said to constitute the school of which he was the founder, how rich an inheritance of brilliant and melodious fancies do we not owe to him! For what would any of us resign the Rape of the Lock, or the Epistle of Eloisa, or the Essay on Man, or the Moral Essays, or the Satires, or the Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot, or the Dunciad? That we have nothing in the same style in the language to be set beside or weighed against any one of these performances will probably be admitted by all; and, if we could say no more, this would be to assign to Pope a rank in our poetic literature which certainly not so many as half a dozen other names are entitled to share with his. Down to his own day at least, Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, and Dryden alone

had any pretensions to be placed before him or by his side. It is unnecessary to dilate upon what has been sufficiently pointed out by all the critics, and is too obvious to be overlooked, the general resemblance of his poetry, in both its form and spirit, to that of Dryden rather than to that of our elder great writers. A remarkable external peculiarity of it is, that he is probably the only one of our modern poets of eminence who has written nothing in blank verse; while even in rhyme he has nearly confined himself to that one decasyllabic line upon which it would almost seem to have been his purpose to impress a new shape and character. He belongs to the classical school as opposed to the romantic, to that in which a French rather than to that in which an Italian inspiration may be detected. Whether this is to be attributed principally to his constitutional temperament and the native character of his imagination, or to the influences of the age in which he lived and wrote, we shall not stop to inquire. It is enough that such is the fact. But, though he may be regarded as in the main the pupil and legitimate successor of Dryden, the amount of what he learned or borrowed from that master was by no means so considerable as to prevent his manner from having a great deal in it that is distinctive and original. If Dryden has more impetuosity and a freer flow, Pope has far more delicacy, and, on fit occasions, far more tenderness and true passion. Dryden has written nothing in the same style with the Rape of the Lock on the one hand, or with the Epistle to Abelard and the Elegy on the Death of an Unfortunate Lady on the other. Indeed, these two styles may be said to have been both, in so far as the English tongue is concerned, invented by Pope. In what preceding writer had he an example of either? Nay, did either the French or the Italian language furnish him with anything to copy from nearly so brilliant and felicitous as his own performances? In the sharper or more severe species of satire, again, while in some things he is inferior to Dryden, in others he excels him. It must be admitted that Dryden's is the nobler, the more generous scorn; it is passionate, while Pope's is frequently only peevish: the one is vehement, the other venomous. But, although Pope does not wield the ponderous, fervid scourge with which his predecessor tears and mangles the luckless object of his indignation or derision, he knows how, with a lighter touch, to inflict a torture quite as maddening at the moment, and perhaps more difficult to heal.

Neither has anything of the easy elegance, the simple natural grace, the most exquisite artifice simulating the absence of all art, of Horace; but the care, and dexterity, and superior refinement of Pope, his neatness, and concentration, and point, supply a better substitute for these charms than the ruder strength, and more turbulent passion, of Dryden. If Dryden, too, has more natural fire and force, and rises in his greater passages to a stormy grandeur to which the other does not venture to commit himself, Pope in some degree compensates for that by a dignity, a quiet, sometimes pathetic, majesty, which we find nowhere in Dryden's poetry. Dryden has translated the Æneid, and Pope the Iliad; but the two tasks would apparently have been better distributed if Dryden had chanced to have taken up Homer, and left Virgil to Pope. Pope's Iliad, in truth, whatever may be its merits of another kind, is, in spirit and style, about the most unhomeric performance in the whole compass of our poetry, as Pope had, of all our great poets, the most unhomeric genius. He was emphatically the poet of the highly artificial age in which he lived; and his excellence lay in, or at least was fostered and perfected by, the accordance of all his tastes and talents, of his whole moral and intellectual constitution, with the spirit of that condition of things. Not touches of natural emotion, but the titillation of wit and fancy,—not tones of natural music, but the tone of good society,—make up the charm of his poetry; the polish, pungency, and brilliance of which, however, in its most happily executed passages leave nothing in that style to be desired. Pope, no doubt, wrote with a care and elaboration that were unknown to Dryden; against whom, indeed, it is a reproach made by his pupil, that, copious as he was, he

> ——— wanted or forgot
> The last and greatest art—the art to blot.

And so perhaps, although the expression is a strong and a startling one, may the said art, not without some reason, be called in reference to the particular species of poetry which Dryden and Pope cultivated, dependent as that is for its success in pleasing us almost as much upon the absence of faults as upon the presence of beauties. Such partial obscuration or distortion of the imagery as we excuse, or even admire, in the expanded mirror of a lake reflecting the woods and hills and overhanging sky, when its waters are ruffled or swayed by the fitful breeze,

would be intolerable in a looking-glass, were it otherwise the most splendid article of the sort that upholstery every furnished.

We shall not occupy much of our space with quotations from a writer whose works are so universally known, and may be supposed to be in the hands of most of our readers; but those most familiar with Pope's poetry will not object to having placed before them a single extract from each of two of his most perfect productions, in different styles, while, if there should be any to whom he is known chiefly by his fame, they may be induced, perhaps, by these short specimens to seek further acquaintance with what he has written. Here is one of the descriptions, full of life and light, from the Rape of the Lock:—

But now secure the painted vessel glides,
The sunbeams trembling on the floating tides;
While melting music steals upon the sky,
And softened sounds along the water die;
Smooth flow the waves, the zephyrs gently play,
Belinda smiled, and all the world was gay.
All but the Sylph; with careful thoughts oppressed,
The impending woe sat heavy on his breast.
He summons straight his denizens of air;
The lucid squadrons round the sail repair:
Soft o'er the shrouds aërial whispers breathe,
That seemed but zephyrs to the train beneath.
Some to the sun their insect wings unfold,
Waft on the breeze, or sink in clouds of gold;
Transparent forms, too fine for mortal sight,
Their fluid bodies half dissolved in light.
Loose to the winds their airy garments flew,
Thin glittering texture of the filmy dew,
Dipped in the richest tinctures of the skies,
Where light disports in ever-mingling dyes,
While every beam new transient colours flings,
Colours that change whene'er they wave their wings.
Amid the circle, on the gilded mast,
Superior by the head, was Ariel placed;
His purple pinions opening to the sun,
He raised his azure wand, and thus begun:
"Ye Sylphs and Sylphids, to your chief give ear;
Fays, Fairies, Genii, Elves, and Demons hear:
Ye know the spheres and various tasks assigned
By laws eternal to the aërial kind.
Some in the fields of purest ether play,
And bask and whiten in the blaze of day;

Some guide the course of wandering orbs on high,
Or roll the planets through the boundless sky;
Some, less refined, beneath the moon's pale light
Pursue the stars that shoot athwart the night,
Or seek the mists in grosser air below,
Or dip their pinions in the painted bow,
Or brew fierce tempests on the wintry main,
Or o'er the glebe distil the kindly rain.
Others on earth o'er human race preside,
Watch all their ways, and all their actions guide;
Of these the chief the care of nations own,
And guard with arms divine the British throne.

"Our humble province is to tend the fair,
Not a less pleasing, though less glorious care;
To save the powder from too rude a gale,
Nor let the imprisoned essences exhale;
To draw fresh colours from the vernal flowers;
To steal from rainbows, ere they drop in showers,
A brighter wash; to curl their waving hairs,
Assist their blushes, and inspire their airs;
Nay, oft in dreams invention we bestow,
To change a flounce, or add a furbelow.

"This day black omens threat the brightest fair
That e'er deserved a watchful spirit's care;
Some dire disaster, or by force or slight,
But what, or where, the Fates have wrapped in night.
Whether the nymph shall break Diana's law,
Or some frail China jar receive a flaw;
Or stain her honour, or her new brocade,
Forget her prayers, or miss a masquerade;
Or lose her heart, or necklace, at a ball,
Or whether heaven has doomed that Shock must fall.
Haste then, ye spirits, to your charge repair,
The fluttering fan be Zephyretta's care;
The drops to thee, Brillante, we consign,
And, Momentilla, let the watch be thine;
Do thou, Crispissa, tend her favourite lock;
Ariel himself shall be the guard of Shock.

. . . . . .

"Whatever spirit, careless of his charge,
His post neglects, or leaves the fair at large,
Shall feel sharp vengeance soon o'ertake his sins;
Be stopped in vials, or transfixed with pins;
Or plunged in lakes of bitter washes lie,
Or wedged whole ages in a bodkin's eye:
Gums and pomatums shall his flight restrain,
While clogged he beats his silken wings in vain:

Or alum styptics, with contracting power,
Shrink his thin essence like a shrivelled flower;
Or, as Ixion fixed, the wretch shall feel
The giddy motion of the whirling mill,
In fumes of burning chocolate shall glow,
And tremble at the sea that froths below!"
He spoke; the spirits from the sails descend;
Some, orb in orb, around the nymph extend;
Some thread the mazy ringlets of her hair;
Some hang upon the pendants of her ear;
With beating hearts the dire event they wait,
Anxious, and trembling for the birth of fate.

Not less spirited or less highly finished, in a severer or grander manner, is the noble conclusion of the Dunciad:—

"Oh," cried the goddess,[1] for some pedant reign!
Some gentle James to bless the land again;
To stick the doctor's chair into the throne,
Give law to words, or war with words alone;
Senates and courts with Greek and Latin rule,
And turn the council to a grammar-school!
For sure, if Dulness sees a grateful day,
'Tis in the shade of arbitrary sway.
O! if my sons may learn one earthly thing,
Teach but that one, sufficient for a king;
That which my priests, and mine alone, maintain,
Which, as it dies or lives, we fall or reign:
May you, my Cam and Isis, preach it long,
The right divine of kings to govern wrong."
Prompt at the call, around the goddess roll
Broad hats, and hoods, and caps, a sable shoal:
Thick and more thick the black blockade extends,
A hundred head of Aristotle's friends.
Nor wert thou, Isis, wanting to the day
(Though Christ-Church long kept prudishly away).
Each staunch polemic, stubborn as a rock,
Each fierce logician, still expelling Locke,
Came whip and spur, and dashed through thin and thick,
On German Crouzaz and Dutch Burgersdyck.
As many quit the streams that murmuring fall
To lull the sons of Margaret and Clare-hall,
Where Bentley late tempestuous wont to sport
In troubled waters, but now sleeps in port.
Before them marched that awful Aristarch;
Ploughed was his front with many a deep remark:

[1] Dulness.

His hat, which never vailed to human pride,
Walker with reverence took, and laid aside.
Low bowed the rest; he, kingly, did but nod:
So upright quakers please both man and God.
"Mistress! dismiss that rabble from your throne:
Avaunt!—Is Aristarchus yet unknown?
The mighty scholiast, whose unwearied pains
Made Horace dull, and humbled Milton's strains.
Turn what they will to verse, their toil is vain,
Critics like me shall make it prose again.
Roman and Greek grammarians! know your better,
Author of something yet more great than letter;
While towering o'er your alphabet, like Saul,
Stands our Digamma, and o'ertops them all.
'Tis true, on words is still our whole debate,
Disputes of Me or Te, or Aut or At,
To sound or sink in *cano* O or A,
To give up Cicero to C or K.
Let Freind affect to speak as Terence spoke,
And Alsop never but like Horace joke:
For me, what Virgil, Pliny may deny,
Manilius or Solinus shall supply:
For Attic phrase in Plato let them seek,
I poach in Suidas for unlicensed Greek.
In ancient sense if any needs will deal,
Be sure I give them fragments, not a meal;
What Gellius or Stobaeus hashed before,
Or chewed by blind old scholiasts o'er and o'er,
The critic eye, that microscope of wit,
Sees hairs and pores, examines bit by bit:
How parts relate to parts, or they to whole,
The body's harmony, the beaming soul,
Are things which Kuster, Burman, Wasse shall see
When man's whole frame is obvious to a flea.

. . . . . .

Walker! our hat"—nor more he deigned to say,
But, stern as Ajax' spectre, strode away.

. . . . . .

O muse! relate (for you can tell alone;
Wits have short memories, and dunces none);
Relate who first, who last resigned to rest;
Whose heads she partly, whose completely blessed;
What charms could faction, what ambition lull,
The venal quiet, and entrance the dull;
Till drowned was sense, and shame, and right, and wrong;
O sing, and hush the nations with thy song!

In vain, in vain! the all-composing hour
Resistless falls! the muse obeys the power.
She comes! she comes! the sable throne behold
Of night primeval, and of Chaos old!
Before her Fancy's gilded clouds decay,
And all its varying rainbows die away.
Wit shoots in vain its momentary fires,
The meteor drops, and in a flash expires.
As one by one, at dread Medea's strain,
The sickening stars fade off the ethereal plain;
As Argus' eyes, by Hermes' wand oppressed,
Closed one by one to everlasting rest;
Thus, at her felt approach, and secret might,
Art after art goes out, and all is night.
See skulking truth to her own cavern fled,
Mountains of casuistry heaped o'er her head!
Philosophy, that leaned on heaven before,
Shrinks to her second cause and is no more.
Physic of Metaphysic begs defence,
And Metaphysic calls for aid on sense!
See Mystery to Mathematics fly!
In vain! they gaze, turn giddy, rave and die.
Religion blushing veils her sacred fires,
And unawares Morality expires.
Nor public flame nor private dares to shine,
Nor human spark is left, nor glimpse divine!
Lo, thy dread empire, Chaos! is restored!
Light dies before thy uncreating word:
Thy hand, great Anarch! lets the curtain fall;
And universal darkness buries all.

Addison and Steele.

Next to the prose of Swift and the poetry of Pope, perhaps the portion of the literature of the beginning of the last century that was both most influential at the time, and still lives most in the popular remembrance, is that connected with the names of Addison and Steele. These two writers were the chief boast of the Whig party, as Swift and Pope were of the Tories. Addison's poem, The Campaign, on the victory of Blenheim, his imposing but frigid tragedy of Cato, and some other dramatic productions, besides various other writings in prose, have given him a reputation in many departments of literature; and Steele also holds

a respectable rank among our comic dramatists as the author of the Tender Husband and the Conscious Lovers; but it is as the first, and on the whole the best, of our English essayists, the principal authors (in every sense) of the Tatler, the Spectator, and the Guardian, that these two writers have sent down their names with most honour to posterity, and have especially earned the love and gratitude of their countrymen. Steele was in his thirty-ninth, and his friend Addison in his thirty-eighth year, when the Tatler was started by the former in April, 1709. The paper, published thrice a week, had gone on for about six weeks before Addison took any part in it; but from that time he became, next to Steele, the chief contributor to it, till it was dropped in January, 1711. "I have only one gentleman," says Steele in his preface to the collected papers, "who will be nameless, to thank for any frequent assistance to me, which indeed it would have been barbarous in him to have denied to one with whom he has lived in an intimacy from childhood, considering the great ease with which he is able to dispatch the most entertaining pieces of this nature." The person alluded to is Addison. "This good office," Steele generously adds, "he performed with such force of genius, humour, wit, and learning, that I fared like a distressed prince who calls in a powerful neighbour to his aid: I was undone by my auxiliary; when I had once called him in, I could not subsist without dependence on him." By far the greater part of the Tatler, however, is Steele's. Of 271 papers of which it consists, above 200 are attributed either entirely or in the greater part to him, while those believed to have been written by Addison are only about fifty. Among the other contributors Swift is the most frequent. The Spectator was begun within two months after the discontinuance of the Tatler, and was carried on at the rate of six papers a week till the 6th of December, 1712, on which day Number 555 was published. In these first seven volumes of the Spectator Addison's papers are probably more numerous than Steele's; and between them they wrote perhaps four-fifths of the whole work. The Guardian was commenced on the 12th of March, 1713, and, being also published six times a week, had extended to 175 numbers, when it was brought to a close on the 1st of October in the same year. There is only one paper by Addison in the first volume of the Guardian, but to the second he was rather a more frequent contributor than Steele. This was the last work in which the two

friends joined; for Addison, we believe, wrote nothing in the Englishman, the fifty-seven numbers of which were published, at the rate of three a week, between the 6th of October, 1713, and the 15th of February following; nor Steele any of the papers, eighty in number, forming the eighth volume of the Spectator, of which the first was published on the 18th of June, 1714, the last on the 20th of December in the same year, the rate of publication being also three times a week. Of these additional Spectators twenty-four are attributed to Addison. The friendship of nearly half a century which had united these two admirable writers was rent asunder by political differences some years before the death of Addison, in 1719: Steele survived till 1729.

Invented or introduced among us as the periodical essay may be said to have been by Steele and Addison, it is a species of writing, as already observed, in which perhaps they have never been surpassed, or on the whole equalled, by any one of their many followers. More elaboration and depth, and also more brilliancy, we may have had in some recent attempts of the same kind; but hardly so much genuine liveliness, ease, and cordiality, anything so thoroughly agreeable, so skilfully adapted to interest without demanding more attention than is naturally and spontaneously given to it. Perhaps so large an admixture of the speculative and didactic was never made so easy of apprehension and so entertaining, so like in the reading to the merely narrative. But, besides this constant atmosphere of the pleasurable arising simply from the lightness, variety, and urbanity of these delightful papers, the delicate imagination and exquisite humour of Addison, and the vivacity, warmheartedness, and altogether generous nature of Steele, give a charm to the best of them, which is to be enjoyed, not described. We not only admire the writers, but soon come to love them, and to regard both them and the several fictitious personages that move about in the other little world they have created for us as among our best and best-known friends.*

* By far the most elaborate tribute that has been paid to the genius of Addison, it need hardly be noticed, is Lord Macaulay's brilliant Essay originally published in the Edinburgh Review, for July, 1843.

Shaftesbury.

Among the prose works of the early part of the last century which used to have the highest reputation for purity and elegance of style, is that by Lord Shaftesbury entitled Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Things. Its author, Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury (grandson of the first Earl, the famous meteoric politician of the reign of Charles II.), was born in 1671 and died in 1713; and the Characteristics, which did not appear in its present form, or with that title, till after his death, consists of a collection of disquisitions on various questions in moral, metaphysical, and critical philosophy, most of which he had previously published separately. We have nothing to do here with the philosophical system of Lord Shaftesbury, of which, whatever may be its defects, the spirit is at least pure, lofty, and tolerant; but as a specimen of his style we will transcribe a single short passage from the most considerable of the treatises that form his first volume, that which he calls Soliloquy, or Advice to an Author, first printed in 1710. The passage we have selected will also be found curious as a sample of Shakespearian criticism at that day, and for the remarks it contains on the tragedy of Hamlet, about which so much has been written in more recent times:—

Let our authors or poets complain ever so much of the genius of our people, 'tis evident we are not altogether so barbarous or gothic as they pretend. We are naturally no ill soil, and have musical parts which might be cultivated with great advantage, if these gentlemen would use the art of masters in their composition. They have power to work upon our better inclinations, and may know by certain tokens that their audience is disposed to receive nobler subjects, and taste a better manner, than that which, through indulgence to themselves more than to the world, they are generally pleased to make their choice.

Besides some laudable attempts which have been made with tolerable success, of late years, towards a just manner of writing, both in the heroic and familiar style, we have older proofs of a right disposition in our people towards the moral and instructive way. Our old dramatic poet[1] may witness for our good ear and manly relish. Notwithstanding his natural rudeness, his unpolished style, his antiquated phrase and wit, his want of method and coherence, and his deficiency in almost all the graces and orna-

[1] Shakespeare.

ments of this kind of writings; yet by the justness of his moral, the aptness of many of his descriptions, and the plain and natural turn of several of his characters, he pleases his audience, and often gains their ear, without a single bribe from luxury or vice. That piece of his[1] which appears to have most affected English hearts, and has perhaps been oftenest acted of any which have come upon our stage, is almost one continued moral; a series of deep reflections, drawn from one mouth, upon the subject of one single accident and calamity, naturally fitted to move horror and compassion. It may be properly said of this play, if I mistake not, that it has only one character or principal part. It contains no adoration or flattery to the sex; no ranting at the gods; no blustering heroism; nor anything of that curious mixture of the fierce and tender which makes the hinge of modern tragedy, and nicely varies it between the points of love and honour.

Upon the whole, since in the two great poetic stations, the epic and dramatic, we may observe the moral genius so naturally prevalent; since our most approved heroic poem[2] has neither the softness of language nor the fashionable turn of wit, but merely solid thought, strong reasoning, noble passion, and a continued thread of moral doctrine, piety, and virtue to recommend it; we may justly infer that it is not so much the public ear, as the ill hand and vicious manner of our poets, which needs redress.

And thus at last we are returned to our old article of advice; that main preliminary of self-study and inward converse, which we have found so much wanting in the authors of our time. They should add the wisdom of the heart to the talk and exercise of the brain, in order to bring proportion and beauty into their works. That their composition and vein of writing may be natural and free, they should settle matters in the first place with themselves. And, having gained a mastery here, they may easily, with the help of their genius, and a right use of art, command their audience, and establish a good taste.

Mandeville.

But the most remarkable philosophical work of this time, at least in a literary point of view, is Mandeville's Fable of the Bees. Bernard de Mandeville was a native of Holland, in which country he was born about the year 1670; but, after having studied medicine and taken his doctor's degree, he came over to England about the end of that century, and he resided here till his death in 1733. His Fable of the Bees originally appeared in 1708, in the form of a poem of 400 lines in octosyllabic verse, entitled The Grumbling Hive, or Knaves turned Honest, and it was not till eight years afterwards that he added the prose notes

[1] The tragedy of Hamlet. [2] Milton's Paradise Lost.

which make the bulk of the first volume of the work as we now have it. The second volume, or part, which consists of a series of six dialogues, was not published till 1729. The leading idea of the book is indicated by its second title, Private Vices Public Benefits;—in other words, that what are called and what really are vices in themselves, and in the individual indulging in them, are nevertheless, in many respects, serviceable to the community. Mandeville holds in fact, to quote the words in which he sums up his theory at the close of his first volume, "that neither the friendly qualities and kind affections that are natural to man, nor the real virtues he is capable of acquiring by reason and self-denial, are the foundation of society; but that what we call evil in this world, moral as well as natural, is the grand principle that makes us sociable creatures, the solid basis, the life and support, of all trades and employments without exception; that there we must look for the true origin of all arts and sciences; and that the moment evil ceases the society must be spoiled, if not totally destroyed." The doctrine had a startling appearance thus nakedly announced; and the book occasioned a great commotion; but it is now generally admitted that, whatever may be the worth, or worthlessness, of the philosophical system propounded in it, the author's object was not an immoral one. Independently altogether of its general principles and conclusions, the work is full both of curious matter and vigorous writing. As it is one of the books more talked of than generally known, we will make room for a few extracts. Our first shall be a part of the exposition of the evil and what is maintained to be also the good of gin-drinking—an English popular vice which, we may just remark, was carried in that day to a much greater excess than at present, whatever certain modern indications, viewed by themselves, might lead us to think:—

Nothing is more destructive, either in regard to the health or the vigilance and industry of the poor, than the infamous liquor, the name of which, derived from juniper berries in Dutch, is now by frequent use, and the laconic spirit of the nation, from a word of middling length shrunk into a monosyllable, intoxicating Gin, that charms the inactive, the desperate and crazy of either sex, and makes the starving not behold his rags and nakedness with stupid indolence, or banter both in senseless laughter and more insipid jests; it is a fiery lake that sets the brain in flame, burns up the entrails, and scorches every part within; and at the same time a Lethe of oblivion, in which the wretch immersed drowns his most pinching cares,

and; with his reason, all anxious reflection on brats that cry for food, hard winters, frosts, and horrid empty home.

In hot and adust tempers, it makes men quarrelsome, renders 'em brutes and savages, sets 'em on to fight for nothing, and has often been the cause of murder. It has broke and destroyed the strongest constitutions, thrown 'em into consumptions, and been the fatal and immediate occasion of apoplexies, frenzies, and sudden death. But as these latter mischiefs happen but seldom, they might be overlooked and connived at; but this cannot be said of the many diseases that are familiar to the liquor, and which are daily and hourly produced by it: such as loss of appetite, fevers, black and yellow jaundice, convulsions, stone and gravel, dropsies, and leucophlegmacies.

Among the doating admirers of this liquid poison, many of the meanest rank, from a sincere affection to the commodity itself, become dealers in it, and take delight to help others to what they love themselves. . . . . But, as these starvelings commonly drink more than their gains, they seldom by selling mend the wretchedness of condition they laboured under whilst they were only buyers. In the fag-end and outskirts of the town, and all places of the vilest resort, it is sold in some part or other of almost every house, frequently in cellars, and sometimes in the garret. The petty traders in this Stygian comfort are supplied by others in somewhat higher station, that keep professed brandy shops, and are as little to be envied as the former; and among the middling people I know not a more miserable shift for a livelihood than their calling. Whoever would thrive in it must, in the first place, be of a watchful and suspicious as well as a bold and resolute temper, that he may not be imposed upon by cheats and sharpers, nor outbullied by the oaths and imprecations of hackney-coachmen and footsoldiers; in the second, he ought to be a dabster at gross jokes and loud laughter, and have all the winning ways to allure customers, and draw out their money, and be well versed in the low jests and railleries the mob make use of to banter prudence and frugality. He must be affable and obsequious to the most despicable; always ready and officious to help a porter down with his load, shake hands with a basket-woman, pull off his hat to an oyster-wench, and be familiar with a beggar; with patience and good humour he must be able to endure the filthy actions and viler language of nasty drabs and the loudest rake-hells, and without a frown or the least aversion bear with all the stench and squalor, noise and impertinence, that the utmost indigence, laziness, and ebriety, can produce in the most shameless and abandoned vulgar.

The vast number of the shops I speak of throughout the city and suburbs are an astonishing evidence of the many seducers that in a lawful occupation are necessary to the introduction and increase of all the sloth, sottishness, want, and misery, which the abuse of strong waters is the immediate cause of, to lift above mediocrity perhaps half a score men that deal in the same commodity by wholesale; whilst among the retailers, though qualified as I required, a much greater number are broke and ruined, for not abstaining from the Circean cup they hold out to others, and the more for-

tunate are their whole life-time obliged to take the uncommon pains, endure the hardships, and swallow all the ungrateful and shocking things I named for little or nothing beyond a bare sustenance and their daily bread.

The short-sighted vulgar, in the chain of causes, can seldom see further than one link; but those who can enlarge their view, and will give themselves the leisure of gazing on the prospect of concatenated events, may, in a hundred places, see good spring up and pullulate from evil, as naturally as chickens do from eggs. The money that arises from the duties upon malt is a considerable part of the national revenue; and, should no spirits be distilled from it, the public treasure would prodigiously suffer on that head. But, if we would set in a true light the many advantages, and large catalogue of solid blessings, that accrue from and are owing to the evil I treat of, we are to consider the rents that are received, the ground that is tilled, the tools that are made, the cattle that are employed, and, above all, the multitude of poor that are maintained by the variety of labour required in husbandry, in malting, in carriage, and distillation, before we can have that produce of malt which we call Low Wines, and is but the beginning from which the various spirits are afterwards to be made.

Besides this, a sharp-sighted good-humoured man might pick up abundance of good from the rubbish which I have all flung away for evil. He would tell me, that whatever sloth and sottishness might be occasioned by the abuse of malt spirits, the moderate use of it was of inestimable benefit to the poor, who could purchase no cordials of higher prices; that it was a universal comfort, not only in cold and weariness, but most of the afflictions that are peculiar to the necessitous, and had often to the most destitute supplied the places of meat, drink, clothes, and lodging. That the stupid indolence in the most wretched condition occasioned by those composing draughts which I complained of, was a blessing to thousands; for that certainly those were the happiest who felt the least pain. As to diseases, he would say that, as it caused some, so it cured others, and that if the excess in those liquors had been sudden death to some few, the habit of drinking them daily prolonged the lives of many whom once it agreed with; that for the loss sustained from the insignificant quarrels it created at home, we were overpaid in the advantage we received from it abroad, by upholding the courage of soldiers and animating the sailors to the combat; and that in the two last wars no considerable victory had been obtained without it.

This reasoning will probably not seem very forcible either to the moralists or the political economists of our day; and the passage is by no means to be taken as an example of the most ingenious and original strain of thinking to be found in the book. Its interest lies in the vividness with which it describes what is still unhappily a very remarkable feature of our social condition as it presented itself a century ago. The following remarks are more striking for their peculiarity and penetration:—

Clothes were originally made for two ends; to hide our nakedness, and to fence our bodies against the weather and other outward injuries. To these our boundless pride has added a third, which is ornament; for what else but an excess of stupid vanity could have prevailed upon our reason to fancy that ornamental which must continually put us in mind of our wants and misery beyond all other animals, that are ready-clothed by nature herself? It is indeed to be admired how so sensible a creature as man, that pretends to so many fine qualities of his own, should condescend to value himself upon what is robbed from so innocent and defenceless an animal as a sheep, or what he is beholden for to the most insignificant thing upon earth, a dying worm; yet, whilst he is proud of such trifling depredations, he has the folly to laugh at the Hottentots on the farthest promontory of Africa, who adorn themselves with the guts of their dead enemies, without considering that they are the ensigns of their valour those barbarians are fine with, the true *spolia opima*, and that, if their pride be more savage than ours, it is certainly less ridiculous, because they wear the spoils of the more noble animal. . . . .

Whoever takes delight in viewing the various scenes of low life, may, on Easter, Whitsun, and other great holidays, meet with scores of people, especially women, of almost the lowest rank, that wear good and fashionable clothes: if, coming to talk with them, you treat them more courteously and with greater respect than what they are conscious they deserve, they'll commonly be ashamed of owning what they are; and often you may, if you are a little inquisitive, discover in them a most anxious care to conceal the business they follow, and the places they live in. The reason is plain: whilst they receive those civilities that are not usually paid them, and which they think only due to their betters, they have the satisfaction to imagine that they appear what they would be, which to weak minds is a pleasure almost as substantial as they could reap from the very accomplishments of their wishes; this golden dream they are unwilling to be disturbed in; and, being sure that the meanness of their condition, if it is known, must sink 'em very low in your opinion, they hug themselves in their disguise, and take all imaginable precaution not to forfeit by a useless discovery the esteem which they flatter themselves that their good clothes have drawn from you. . . . . .

The poorest labourer's wife in the parish, who scorns to wear a strong wholesome frieze, as she might, will half starve herself and her husband to purchase a second-hand gown and petticoat, that cannot do her half the service; because, forsooth, it is more genteel. The weaver, the shoemaker, the tailor, the barber, and every mean working fellow that can set up with little, has the impudence, with the first money he gets, to dress himself like a tradesman of substance. The ordinary retailer, in the clothing of his wife, takes pattern from his neighbour, that deals in the same commodity by wholesale, and the reason he gives for it is, that twelve years ago the other had not a bigger shop than himself. The druggist, mercer, draper, and other creditable shopkeepers can find no difference between themselves and merchants, and therefore dress and live like them. The

merchant's lady, who cannot bear the assurance of those mechanics, flies for refuge to the other end of the town, and scorns to follow any fashion but what she takes from thence. This haughtiness alarms the court; the women of quality are frightened to see merchants' wives and daughters dressed like themselves; this impudence of the city, they cry, is intolerable; mantua-makers are sent for, and the contrivance of fashions becomes all their study, that they may have always new modes ready to take up as soon as those saucy cits shall begin to imitate those in being. The same emulation is continued through the several degrees of quality to an incredible expense, till at last the prince's great favourites, and those of the first rank of all, having nothing else left to outstrip some of their inferiors, are forced to lay out vast estates in pompous equipages, magnificent furniture, sumptuous gardens, and princely palaces. . . . .

The choleric city captain seems impatient to come to action, and, expressing his warlike genius by the firmness of his steps, makes his pike, for want of exercise, tremble at the valour of his arm: his martial finery, as he marches along, inspires him with an unusual elevation of mind, by which, endeavouring to forget his shop as well as himself, he looks up at the balconies with the fierceness of a Saracen conqueror; whilst the phlegmatic alderman, now become venerable both for his age and his authority, contents himself with being thought a considerable man; and, knowing no easier way to express his vanity, looks big in his coach, where, being known by his paltry livery, he receives, in sullen state, the homage that is paid him by the meaner sort of people.

The beardless ensign counterfeits a gravity above his years, and with a ridiculous assurance, strives to imitate the stern countenance of his colonel, flattering himself all the while that by his daring mien you'll judge of his powers. The youthful fair, in a vast concern of being overlooked, by the continual changing of her posture betrays a violent desire of being observed, and, catching, as it were, at everybody's eyes, courts, with obliging looks, the admiration of her beholders. The conceited coxcomb, on the contrary, displaying an air of sufficiency, is wholly taken up with the contemplation of his own perfections, and in public places discovers such a disregard to others that the ignorant must imagine he thinks himself to be alone.

These and such like are all manifest, though different, tokens of pride, that are obvious to all the world; but man's vanity is not always so soon found out. When we perceive an air of humanity, and men seem not to be employed in admiring themselves, nor altogether unmindful of others, we are apt to pronounce 'em void of pride, when perhaps they are only fatigued with gratifying their vanity, and become languid from a satiety of enjoyments. That outward show of peace within, and drowsy composure of careless negligence, with which a great man is often seen in his plain chariot to roll at ease, are not always so free from art as they may seem to be. *Nothing is more ravishing to the proud than to be thought happy.*

The well-bred gentleman places his greatest pride in the skill he has of covering it with dexterity, and some are so expert in concealing this frailty, that when they are the most guilty of it the vulgar think them the most

exempt from it. Thus, the dissembling courtier, when he appears in state assumes an air of modesty and good humour; and, whilst he is ready to burst with vanity, seems to be wholly ignorant of his greatness; well knowing that those lovely qualities must heighten him in the esteem of others, and be an addition to that grandeur which the coronets about his coach and harnesses, with the rest of his equipage, cannot fail to proclaim without his assistance.

And, as in these pride is overlooked because industriously concealed, so in others again it is denied that they have any when they show, or at least seem to show, it in the most public manner. The wealthy parson, being, as well as the rest of his profession, debarred from the gaiety of laymen, makes it his business to look out for an admirable black and the finest cloth that money can purchase, and distinguishes himself by the fulness of his noble and spotless garment; his wigs are as fashionable as that form he is forced to comply with will admit of; but, as he is only stinted in their shape, so he takes care that for goodness of hair and colour few noblemen shall be able to match 'em; his body is ever clean, as well as his clothes; his sleek face is kept constantly shaved, and his handsome nails are diligently pared; his smooth white hand and a brilliant of the first water, mutually becoming, honour each other with double graces; what linen he discovers is transparently curious, and he scorns ever to be seen abroad with a worse beaver than what a rich banker would be proud of on his wedding day; to all these niceties in dress he adds a majestic gait, and expresses a commanding loftiness in his carriage; yet common civility, notwithstanding the evidence of so many concurring symptoms, won't allow us to suspect any of his actions to be the result of pride; considering the dignity of his office, it is only decency in him what would be vanity in others; and, in good manners to his calling, we ought to believe that the worthy gentleman, without any regard to his reverend person, put himself to all this trouble and expense merely out of a respect which is due to the divine order he belongs to, and a religious zeal to preserve his holy function from the contempt of scoffers. With all my heart: nothing of all this shall be called pride; let me only be allowed to say that to our human capacities it looks very like it.

But, if at last I should grant that there are men who enjoy all the fineries of equipage and furniture, as well as clothes, and yet have no pride in them, it is certain that, if all should be such, that emulation I spoke of before must cease, and consequently trade, which has so great a dependence upon it, suffer in every branch. For to say that, if all men were truly virtuous, they might, without any regard to themselves, consume as much out of zeal to serve their neighbours and promote the public good, as they do now out of self-love and emulation, is a miserable shift and an unreasonable supposition. As there have been good people in all ages, so, without doubt, we are not destitute of them in this; but let us inquire of the periwig-makers and tailors in what gentlemen, even of the greatest wealth and highest quality, they ever could discover such public-spirited views? Ask the lacemen, the mercers, and the linen-drapers, whether the richest, and

if you will, the most virtuous, ladies, if they buy with ready money, or intend to pay in any reasonable time, will not drive from shop to shop, to try the market, make as many words, and stand as hard with them to save a groat or sixpence in a yard, as the most necessitous jilts in town. If it be urged that, if there are not, it is possible there might be such people, I answer that it is possible that cats, instead of killing rats and mice, should feed them, and go about the house to suckle and nurse their young ones; or that a kite should call the hens to their meat, as the cock does, and sit brooding over their chickens instead of devouring 'em; but if they should all do so, they would cease to be cats and kites: it is inconsistent with their natures; and the species of creatures which now we mean when we name cats and kites would be extinct as soon as that could come to pass.

Mandeville, it will be perceived, is no flatterer of human nature; his book, indeed, is written throughout in a spirit not only satirical, but cynical. Every page, however, bears the stamp of independent thinking; and many of the remarks he throws out indicate that he had at least glimpses of views which were not generally perceived or suspected at that day. It would probably be found that the Fable of the Bees has been very serviceable in the way of suggestion to various subsequent writers who have not adopted the general principles of the work. The following paragraphs, for example, are remarkable as an anticipation of a famous passage in the Wealth of Nations:—

If we trace the most flourishing nations in their origin, we shall find, that, in the remote beginnings of every society, the richest and most considerable men among them were a great while destitute of a great many comforts of life that are now enjoyed by the meanest and most humble wretches; so that many things which were once looked upon as the inventions of luxury are now allowed even to those that are so miserably poor as to become the objects of public charity, nay counted so necessary that we think no human creature ought to want them. . . . . A man would be laughed at that should discover luxury in the plain dress of a poor creature that walks along in a thick parish gown, and a coarse shirt underneath it; and yet what a number of people, how many different trades, and what a variety of skill and tools must be employed to have the most ordinary Yorkshire cloth! What depth of thought and ingenuity, what toil and labour, and what length of time must it have cost, before man could learn from a seed to raise and prepare so useful a product as linen! —Remark T, vol. i. pp. 182-183 (edit. of 1724).

What a bustle is there to be made in several parts of the world before a fine scarlet or crimson cloth can be produced; what multiplicity of trades and artificers must be employed! Not only such as are obvious, as woolcombers, spinners, the weaver, the cloth-worker, the scourer, the dyer, the setter, the drawer, and the packer; but others that are more remote, and

might seem foreign to it,—as the mill-wright, the pewterer, and the chemist, which yet are all necessary, as well as a great number of other handicrafts, to have the tools, utensils, and other implements belonging to the trades already named. But all these things are done at home, and may be performed without extraordinary fatigue or danger; the most frightful prospect is left behind, when we reflect on the toil and hazard that are to be undergone abroad, the vast seas we are to go over, the different climates we are to endure, and the several nations we must be obliged to for their assistance. Spain alone, it is true, might furnish us with wool to make the finest cloth; but what skill and pains, what experience and ingenuity, are required to dye it of those beautiful colours! How widely are the drugs and other ingredients dispersed through the universe that are to meet in one kettle! Alum, indeed, we have of our own; argot we might have from the Rhine, and vitriol from Hungary: all this is in Europe. But then for saltpetre in quantity we are forced to go as far as the East Indies. Cochenil, unknown to the ancients, is not much nearer to us, though in a quite different part of the earth; we buy it, 'tis true, from the Spaniards: but, not being their product, they are forced to fetch it for us from the remotest corner of the new world in the West Indies. Whilst so many sailors are broiling in the sun and sweltered with heat in the East and West of us, another set of them are freezing in the North to fetch potashes from Russia.—Search into the Nature of Society (appended to the second edition), pp. 411-413.

In another place, indeed (Remark Q, pp. 213–216), Mandeville almost enunciates one of the great leading principles of Smith's work: after showing how a nation might be undone by too much money, he concludes, "Let the value of gold and silver either rise or fall, the enjoyment of all societies will ever depend upon the fruits of the earth and the *labour* of the people; both which joined together are a more certain, a more inexhaustible, and a more real treasure than the gold of Brazil or the silver of Potosi." It might be conjectured also from some of his other writings that Smith was a reader of Mandeville: the following sentence, for instance (Remark C, p. 55), may be said almost to contain the germ of the Theory of the Moral Sentiments:—"That we are often ashamed and blush for others . . . is nothing else but that sometimes we make the case of others too nearly our own;—so people shriek out when they see others in danger:—whilst we are reflecting with too much earnest on the effect which such a blameable action, if it was ours, would produce in us, the spirits, and consequently the blood, are insensibly moved after the same manner as if the action was our own, and so the same symptoms must appear."

GAY; ARBUTHNOT; ATTERBURY.

Along with Pope, as we have seen, Swift numbers among those who would most mourn his death, Gay and Arbuthnot. He survived them both, Gay having died, in his forty-fourth year, in 1732, and Arbuthnot at a much more advanced age in 1735.

John Gay, the author of a considerable quantity of verse and of above a dozen dramatic pieces, is now chiefly remembered for his Beggar's Opera, his Fables, his mock-heroic poem of Trivia, or the Art of Walking the Streets of London, and some of his ballads. He has no pretensions to any elevation of genius, but there is an agreeable ease, nature, and sprightliness in everything he has written; and the happiest of his performances are animated by an archness, and light but spirited raillery, in which he has not often been excelled. His celebrated English opera, as it was the first attempt of the kind, still remains the only one that has been eminently successful. Now, indeed, that much of the wit has lost its point and application to existing characters and circumstances, the dialogue of the play, apart from the music, may be admitted to owe its popularity in some degree to its traditionary fame; but still what is temporary in it is intermixed with a sufficiently diffused, though not very rich, vein of general satire, to allow the whole to retain considerable piquancy. Even at first the Beggar's Opera was probably indebted for the greater portion of its success to the music; and that is so happily selected that it continues still as fresh and as delightful as ever.

Dr. John Arbuthnot, a native of Scotland, besides various professional works of much ability, is generally regarded as the author of the Memoirs of Martinus Scriblerus, printed in the works of Pope and Swift, and said to have been intended as the commencement of a general satire on the abuses of learning, of which, however, nothing more was ever written except Pope's treatise already mentioned on the Bathos, and one or two shorter fragments. The celebrated political satire, entitled The History of John Bull, which has been the model of various subsequent imitations, but of none in which the fiction is at once so apposite and so ludicrous, is also attributed to Arbuthnot. Pope's highly wrought and noble Prologue to his Satires, which is addressed to Arbuthnot, or rather in which the latter figures as the poet's

interlocutor, will for ever preserve both the memory of their friendship, and also some traits of the character and manner of the learned, witty, and kind-hearted physician.

The commencement of the reign of the Whigs at the accession of the House of Hanover, which deprived Arbuthnot of his appointment of one of the physicians extraordinary—leaving him, however, in the poet's words,

> social, cheerful, and serene,
> And just as rich as when he served a queen—

was more fatal to the fortunes of another of Pope's Tory or Jacobite friends, Francis Atterbury, the celebrated Bishop of Rochester, already mentioned as the principal author of the reply to Bentley's Dissertation on Phalaris. Atterbury also took a distinguished part in the professional controversies of his day, and his sermons and letters, and one or two short copies of verse by him, are well known; but his fervid character probably flashed out in conversation in a way of which we do not gather any notion from his writings. Atterbury was deprived and outlawed in 1722; and he died abroad in 1731, in his sixty-ninth year.

Prior; Parnell.

Matthew Prior is another distinguished name in the band of the Tory writers of this age, and he was also an associate of Pope and Swift, although we hear less of him in their epistolary correspondence than of most of their other friends. Yet perhaps no one of the minor wits and poets of the time has continued to enjoy higher or more general favour with posterity. Much that he wrote, indeed, is now forgotten; but some of the best of his comic tales in verse will live as long as the language, which contains nothing that surpasses them in the union of ease and fluency with sprightliness and point, and in all that makes up the spirit of humorous and graceful narrative. They are our happiest examples of a style that has been cultivated with more frequent success by French writers than by our own. In one poem, his Alma, or The Progress of the Mind, extending to three cantos, he has even applied this light and airy manner of treatment with remarkable felicity to some of the most curious

questions in mental philosophy. In another still longer work, again, entitled Solomon on the Vanity of the World, in three Books, leaving his characteristic archness and pleasantry, he emulates not unsuccessfully the dignity of Pope, not without some traces of natural eloquence and picturesqueness of expression which are all his own. Prior, who was born in 1664, commenced poet before the Revolution, by the publication in 1688 of his City Mouse and Country Mouse, written in concert with Charles Montagu, afterwards Earl of Halifax, in ridicule of Dryden's Hind and Panther; and he continued a Whig nearly to the end of the reign of William; but he then joined the most extreme section of the Tories, and acted cordially with that party down to his death in 1721. Such also was the political course of Parnell, only that, being a younger man, he did not make his change of party till some years after Prior. The Rev. Dr. Thomas Parnell was born at Dublin in 1679, and left his original friends the Whigs at the same time with Swift, on the ejection of Lord Godolphin's ministry, in 1710. He died in 1718. Parnell is always an inoffensive and agreeable writer; and sometimes, as, for example, in his Nightpiece on Death, which probably suggested Gray's more celebrated Elegy, he rises to considerable impressiveness and solemn pathos. But, although his poetry is uniformly fluent and transparent, and its general spirit refined and delicate, it has little warmth or richness, and can only be called a sort of water-colour poetry. One of Parnell's pieces, we may remark,—his Fairy Tale of Edwin and Sir Topaz,—may have given some hints to Burns for his Tam o' Shanter.

Bolingbroke.

The mention of Prior naturally suggests that of his friend and patron, and also the friend of Swift and Pope—Henry St. John, better known by his title of the Lord Viscount Bolingbroke, although his era comes down to a later date, for he was not born till 1678, and he lived to 1751. Bolingbroke wrote no poetry, but his collected prose works fill five quarto volumes (without including his letters), and would thus entitle him by their quantity alone to be ranked as one of the most considerable writers of his time; of which we have abundant testimony that

he was one of the most brilliant orators and talkers, and in every species of mere cleverness one of the most distinguished figures. His writings, being principally on subjects of temporary politics, have lost much of their interest; but a few of them, especially his Letters on the Study and Use of History, his Idea of a Patriot King, and his account and defence of his own conduct in his famous Letter to Sir William Windham, will still reward perusal even for the sake of their matter, while in style and manner almost everything he has left is of very remarkable merit. Bolingbroke's style, as we have elsewhere observed, "was a happy medium between that of the scholar and that of the man of society—or rather it was a happy combination of the best qualities of both, heightening the ease, freedom, fluency, and liveliness of elegant conversation with many of the deeper and richer tones of the eloquence of formal orations and of books. The example he thus set has probably had a very considerable effect in moulding the style of popular writing among us since his time."*

Bolingbroke's elaborate defence of his own political course in his Letter to Sir William Windham (which is of great length, making a volume of above 300 pages) involves the wholesale condemnation of every person with whom or in whose service he had ever acted, beginning with the Earl of Oxford (Harley) and ending with the Pretender. The following is part of what he says of the former:—

These were in general the views of the Tories [in 1710]; and for the part I acted in the prosecution of them, as well as of all the measures accessory to them, I may appeal to mankind. To those who had the opportunity of looking behind the curtain I may likewise appeal for the difficulties which lay in my way, and for the particular discouragements which I met with. A principal load of parliamentary and foreign affairs in their ordinary course lay upon me: the whole negotiation of the peace, and of the troublesome invidious steps preliminary to it, as far as they could be transacted at home, were thrown upon me. I continued in the House of Commons during that important session which preceded the peace; and which, by the spirit shown through the whole course of it, and by the resolutions taken in it, rendered the conclusion of the treaties practicable. After this I was dragged into the House of Lords, in such a manner as to make my promotion a punishment, not a reward; and was there left to defend the treaties almost alone.

* Article on Bolingbroke in Penny Cyclopædia, v. 78.

It would not have been hard to have forced the Earl of Oxford to use me better. His good intentions began to be very much doubted of: the truth is, no opinion of his sincerity had ever taken root in the party; and, which was worse perhaps for a man in his station, the opinion of his capacity began to fall apace. He was so hard pushed in the House of Lords in the beginning of one thousand seven hundred and twelve, that he had been forced, in the middle of the session, to persuade the queen to make a promotion of twelve peers at once; which was an unprecedented and invidious measure, to be excused by nothing but the necessity, and hardly by that. In the House of Commons his credit was low, and my reputation very high. You know the nature of that assembly: they grow, like hounds, fond of the man who shows them game, and by whose halloo they are used to be encouraged. . . . . I thought my mistress treated me ill: but the sense of that duty which I owed her came in aid of other considerations, and prevailed over my resentment. These sentiments, indeed are so much out of fashion, that a man who avows them is in danger of passing for a bubble in the world: yet they were, in the conjuncture I speak of, the true motives of my conduct; and you saw me go on as cheerfully in the troublesome and dangerous work assigned me as if I had been under the utmost satisfaction. I began, indeed, in my heart, to renounce the friendship which till that time I had preserved inviolable for Oxford. I was not aware of all his treachery, nor of the base and little means which he employed then, and continued to employ afterwards, to ruin me in the opinion of the queen, and everywhere else. I saw, however, that he had no friendship for anybody, and that, with respect to me, instead of having the ability to render that merit which I endeavoured to acquire an addition of strength to himself, it became the object of his jealousy, and a reason for undermining me. . . . . He was the first spring of all our motion by his credit with the queen, and his concurrence was necessary to every thing we did by his rank in the state: and yet this man seemed to be sometimes asleep, and sometimes at play. He neglected the thread of business; which was carried on for that reason with less despatch and less advantage in the proper channels; and he kept none in his own hands. He negotiated, indeed, by fits and starts, by little tools and indirect ways; and thus his activity became as hurtful as his indolence; of which I could produce some remarkable instances. . . . . Whether this man ever had any determined view besides that of raising his family, is, I believe, a problematical question in the world. My opinion is, that he never had any other. The conduct of a minister who proposes to himself a great and noble object, and who pursues it steadily, may seem for a while a riddle to the world; especially in a government like ours, where numbers of men, different in their characters, and different in their interests, are at all times to be managed; where public affairs are exposed to more accidents and greater hazards than in other countries; and where, by consequence, he who is at the head of business will find himself often distracted by measures which have no relation to his purpose, and obliged to bend himself to things which are in some degree contrary to his main design. The ocean

which environs us is an emblem of our government; and the pilot and the minister are in similar circumstances. It seldom happens that either of them can steer a direct course, and they both arrive at their port by means which frequently seem to carry them from it. But, as the work advances, the conduct of him who leads it on with real abilities clears up, the appearing inconsistencies are reconciled, and, when it is once consummated, the whole shows itself so uniform, so plain, and so natural, that every dabbler in politics will be apt to think he could have done the same. But, on the other hand, a man who proposes no such object, who substitutes artifice in the place of ability, who, instead of leading parties, and governing accidents, is eternally agitated backwards and forwards by both, who begins every day something new and carries nothing on to perfection, may impose a while on the world; but a little sooner or a little later the mystery will be revealed, and nothing will be found to be couched under it but a thread of pitiful expedients, the ultimate end of which never extended farther than living from day to day.

The following are some passages from the concluding portion of the Letter:—

The exile of the royal family, under Cromwell's usurpation, was the principal cause of all those misfortunes in which Britain has been involved, as well as of many of those which have happened to the rest of Europe, during more than half a century.

The two brothers, Charles and James, became then infected with popery to such degrees as their different characters admitted of. Charles had parts; and his good understanding served as an antidote to repel the poison. James, the simplest man of his time, drank off the whole chalice. The poison met, in his composition, with all the fear, all the credulity, and all the obstinacy of temper proper to increase its virulence, and to strengthen its effect. The first had always a wrong bias upon him: he connived at the establishment, and indirectly contributed to the growth, of that power, which afterwards disturbed the peace and threatened the liberty of Europe so often; but he went no farther out of the way. The opposition of his parliaments and his own reflections stopped him here. The prince and the people were indeed mutually jealous of one another, from which much present disorder flowed, and the foundation of future evils was laid; but, his good and his bad principles combating still together, he maintained, during a reign of more than twenty years, in some tolerable degree, the authority of the crown and the flourishing estate of the nation. The last, drunk with superstitious and even enthusiastic zeal, ran headlong into his own ruin whilst he endeavoured to precipitate ours. His parliament and his people did all they could to save themselves by winning him. But all was vain: he had no principle on which they could take hold. Even his good qualities worked against them, and his love of his country went halves with his bigotry. How he succeeded we have heard from our fathers. The revolution of one thousand six hundred and eighty-eight saved the nation, and ruined the king.

Now the Pretender's education has rendered him infinitely less fit than his uncle, and at least as unfit as his father, to be king of Great Britain. Add to this, that there is no resource in his understanding. Men of the best sense find it hard to overcome religious prejudices, which are of all the strongest; but he is a slave to the weakest. The rod hangs like the sword of Damocles over his head, and he trembles before his mother and his priest. What, in the name of God, can any member of the Church of England promise himself from such a character? Are we by another revolution to return into the same state from which we were delivered by the first? Let us take example from the Roman Catholics, who act very reasonably in refusing to submit to a Protestant prince. Henry the Fourth had at least as good a title to the throne of France as the Pretender has to ours. His religion alone stood in his way, and he had never been king if he had not removed that obstacle. Shall we submit to a popish prince, who will no more imitate Henry the Fourth in changing his religion, than he will imitate those shining qualities which rendered him the honestest gentleman, the bravest captain, and the greatest prince of his age? . . . . .

It may be said, and it has been urged to me, that if the Chevalier was restored, the knowledge of his character would be our security; *foenum habet in cornu*;[1] there would be no pretence for trusting him, and by consequence it would be easy to put such restrictions on the exercise of the regal power as might hinder him from invading and sapping our religion and liberty. But this I utterly deny. Experience has shown us how ready men are to court power and profit; and who can determine how far either the Tories or the Whigs would comply in order to secure to themselves the enjoyment of all the places in the kingdom? Suppose, however, that a majority of true Israelites should be found whom no temptation could oblige to bow the knee to Baal; in order to preserve the government on one hand, must they not destroy it on the other? The necessary restrictions would in this case be so many, and so important, as to leave hardly the shadow of a monarchy, if he submitted to them; and, if he did not submit to them, these patriots would have no resource left but in rebellion. Thus, therefore, the affair would turn, if the Pretender was restored. We might most probably lose our religion and liberty by the bigotry of the prince and the corruption of the people. We should have no chance of preserving them, but by an entire change of the whole frame of our government, or by another revolution. What reasonable man would voluntarily reduce himself to the necessity of making an option among such melancholy alternatives? . . . . .

Whilst the Pretender and his successors forbore to attack the religion and liberty of the nation, we should remain in the condition of those people who labour under a broken constitution, or who carry about with them some chronical distemper. They feel a little pain at every moment;

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[1] He has a wisp of straw (the mark of a vicious animal) on his horn.—Horace.

or a certain uneasiness, which is sometimes less tolerable than pain; hangs continually on them, and they languish in the constant expectation of dying, perhaps in the severest torture.

But, if the fear of hell should dissipate all other fears in the Pretender's mind, and carry him, which is frequently the effect of that passion, to the most desperate undertakings; if among his successors a man bold enough to make the attempt should arise, the condition of the British nation would be still more deplorable. The attempt succeeding, we should fall into tyranny; for a change of religion could never be brought about by consent; and the same force that would be sufficient to enslave our consciences would be sufficient for all other purposes of arbitrary power. The attempt failing, we should fall into anarchy, for there is no medium when disputes between a prince and his people are arrived at a certain point: he must either be submitted to or deposed.

Garth; Blackmore.

In one of the passages in which he commemorates the friendship of Swift, Atterbury, and Bolingbroke, Pope records also the encouragement his earliest performances in rhyme received from a poet and man of wit of the opposite party, "well-natured Garth."* Sir Samuel Garth, who was an eminent physician and a zealous Whig, is the author of various poetical pieces published in the reigns of William and Anne, of which the one of greatest pretension is that entitled The Dispensary, a mock epic, in six short cantos, on the quarrels of his professional brethren, which appeared in 1699. The wit of this slight performance may have somewhat evaporated with age, but it cannot have been at any time very pungent. A much more voluminous, and also more ambitious, Whig poet of this Augustan age, as it is sometimes called, of our literature, was another physician, Sir Richard Blackmore. Blackmore made his début as a poet so early as the year 1696, by the publication of his Prince Arthur, which was followed by a succession of other epics, or long poems of a serious kind, each in six, ten, or twelve books, under the names of King Arthur, King Alfred, Eliza, the Redeemer, the Creation, &c., besides a Paraphrase of the Book of Job, a new version of the Psalms, a Satire on Wit, and various shorter effusions both in verse and prose. The indefatigable rhymester—"the everlasting Blackmore," as Pope calls him—died at last in 1729. Nothing

* See Prologue to the Satires, 135, &c.

can be conceived wilder or more ludicrous than this incessant discharge of epics; but Blackmore, whom Dryden charged with writing "to the rumbling of his coach's wheels," may be pronounced, without any undue severity, to have been not more a fool than a blockhead. His Creation, indeed, has been praised both by Addison and Johnson; but the politics of the author may be supposed to have blinded or mollified the one critic, and his piety the other; at least the only thing an ordinary reader will be apt to discover in this his *chef-d'œuvre*, that is not the flattest commonplace, is an occasional outbreak of the most ludicrous extravagance and bombast. Altogether this knight, droning away at his epics for above a quarter of a century, is as absurd a phenomenon as is presented to us in the history of literature. Pope has done him no more than justice in assigning him the first place among the contending "brayers" at the immortal games instituted by the goddess of the Dunciad:—

> But far o'er all, sonorous Blackmore's strain:
> Walls, steeples, skies, bray back to him again.
> In Tot'nam fields the brethren, with amaze,
> Prick all their ears up, and forget to graze;
> Long Chancery-lane retentive rolls the sound,
> And courts to courts return it round and round;
> Thames wafts it thence to Rufus' roaring hall,
> And Hungerford re-echoes bawl for bawl.
> All hail him victor in both gifts of song,
> Who sings so loudly and who sings so long.

DEFOE.

The Whigs, however, had to boast of one great writer of prose fiction, if, indeed, one who, although taking a frequent and warm part in the discussion of political subjects, really stood aloof from and above all parties, and may be said to have been in enlargement of view far in advance of all the public men of his time, can be properly claimed by any party. Nor does Daniel Defoe seem to have been recognized as one of themselves by the Whigs of his own day. He stood up, indeed, from first to last, for the principles of the Revolution against those of the Jacobites; but in the alternating struggle between the Whig and Tory parties for the possession of office he took

little or no concern; he served and opposed administrations of either colour without reference to anything but their measures: thus we find him in 1706 assisting Godolphin and his colleagues to compass the union with Scotland; and in 1713 exerting himself with equal zeal in supporting Harley and Bolingbroke in the attempt to carry through their commercial treaty with France. He is believed to have first addressed himself to his countrymen through the press in 1683, when he was only in his twenty-third year. From this time for a space of above thirty years he may be said never to have laid down his pen as a political writer; his publications in prose and verse, which are far too numerous to be here particularized, embracing nearly every subject which either the progress of events made of prominent importance during that time, or which was of eminent popular or social interest independently of times and circumstances. Many of these productions, written for a temporary purpose, or on the spur of some particular occasion, still retain a considerable value, even for their matter, either as directories of conduct or accounts of matters of fact; some, indeed, such as his History of the Union, are the works of highest authority we possess respecting the transactions to which they relate; all of them bear the traces of a sincere, earnest, manly character, and of an understanding unusually active, penetrating, and well-informed. Evidence enough there often is, no doubt, of haste and precipitation, but it is always the haste of a full mind: the subject may be rapidly and somewhat rudely sketched out, and the matter not always very artificially disposed, or set forth to the most advantage; but Defoe never wrote for the mere sake of writing, or unless when he really had something to state which he conceived it important that the public should know. He was too thoroughly honest to make a trade of politics.

Defoe's course and character as a political writer bear a considerable resemblance in some leading points to those of one of the most remarkable men of our own day, the late William Cobbett, who, however, had certainly much more passion and wilfulness than Defoe, whatever we may think of his claims to as much principle. But Defoe's political writings make the smallest part of his literary renown. At the age of fifty-eight—an age when other writers, without the tenth part of his amount of performance to boast of, have usually thought themselves

entitled to close their labours—he commenced a new life of authorship with all the spirit and hopeful alacrity of five-and-twenty. A succession of works of fiction, destined, some of them, to take and keep the highest rank in that department of our literature, and to become popular books in every language of Europe, now proceeded from his pen with a rapidity evincing the easiest flow as well as the greatest fertility of imagination. Robinson Crusoe appeared in 1719; the Dumb Philosopher, the same year; Captain Singleton, in 1720; Duncan Campbell, the same year; Moll Flanders, in 1721; Colonel Jacque, in 1722; the Journal of the Plague, and probably, also, the Memoirs of a Cavalier (to which there is no date), the same year; the Fortunate Mistress, or Roxana, in 1724; the New Voyage Round the World, in 1725; and the Memoirs of Captain Carleton, in 1728. But these effusions of his inventive faculty seem to have been, after all, little more than the amusements of his leisure. In the course of the twelve years from 1719 to his death in 1731, besides his novels, he produced about twenty miscellaneous works, many of them of considerable extent. It may be pretty safely affirmed that no one who has written so much has written so well. No writer of fictitious narrative has ever excelled him in at least one prime excellence—the air of reality which he throws over the creations of his fancy; an effect proceeding from the strength of conception with which he enters into the scenes, adventures, and characters he undertakes to describe, and his perfect reliance upon his power of interesting the reader by the plainest possible manner of relating things essentially interesting. Truth and nature are never either improved by flowers of speech in Defoe, or smothered under that sort of adornment. In some of his political writings there are not wanting passages of considerable height of style, in which, excited by a fit occasion, he employs to good purpose the artifices of rhetorical embellishment and modulation; but in his works of imagination his almost constant characteristic is a simplicity and plainness, which, if there be any affectation about it at all, is chargeable only with that of a homeliness sometimes approaching to rusticity. His writing, however, is always full of idiomatic nerve, and in a high degree graphic and expressive; and even its occasional slovenliness, whether the result of carelessness or design, aids the illusion by which the fiction is made to read so like a

matter of fact. The truthful air of Defoe's fictions, we may just remark, is of quite a different character from that of Swift's, in which, although there is also much of the same vivid conception, and therefore minutely accurate delineation, of every person and thing introduced, a discerning reader will always perceive a smile lurking beneath the author's assumed gravity, telling him intelligibly enough that the whole is a joke. It is said, indeed, that, as the Journal of the Plague is quoted as an authentic narrative by Dr. Mead, and as Lord Chatham was, in all simplicity, in the habit of recommending the Memoirs of a Cavalier to his friends as the best account of the Civil Wars, and as those of Captain Carleton were read even by Samuel Johnson without a suspicion of their being other than a true history, so some Irish bishop was found with faith enough to believe in Gulliver's Travels, although not a little amazed by some things stated in the book. But it is not probable that there ever was any second instance, even on the Irish episcopal bench, of so much simplicity.

Dramatic Writers.

To this age, also, belong three of the greatest of our comic dramatists. Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar were born in the order in which we have named them, and also, we believe, successively presented themselves before the public as writers for the stage in the same order, although they reversed it in making their exits from the stage of life,—Farquhar dying in 1707 at the age of twenty-nine, Vanbrugh in 1726 at that of fifty-four, Congreve not till 1729 in his fifty-ninth or sixtieth year.

Congreve's first play, The Old Bachelor, was brought out in 1693, the author having already, two or three years before, made himself known in the literary world by a novel called The Incognita, or Love and Duty Reconciled. The Old Bachelor was followed by The Double Dealer in 1694, and by Love for Love in 1695; the tragedy of The Mourning Bride was produced in 1697; and the comedy of The Way of the World, in 1700: a masquerade and an opera, both of slight importance, were the only dramatic pieces he wrote during the rest of his life. The comedy of Congreve has not much character, still less humour,

and no nature at all; but blazes and crackles with wit and repartee, for the most part of an unusually pure and brilliant species,—not quaint, forced, and awkward, like what we find in some other attempts, in our dramatic literature and elsewhere, at the same kind of display, but apparently as easy and spontaneous as it is pointed, polished, and exact. His plots are also constructed with much artifice.

Sir John Vanbrugh is the author of ten or twelve comedies, of which the first, The Relapse, was produced in 1697, and of which The Provoked Wife, The Confederacy, and The Journey to London (which last, left unfinished by the author, was completed by Colley Cibber), are those of greatest merit. The wit of Vanbrugh flows rather than flashes; but its copious stream may vie in its own way with the dazzling fire-shower of Congreve's; and his characters have much more of real flesh and blood in their composition, coarse and vicious as almost all the more powerfully drawn among them are.

George Farquhar, the author of The Constant Couple and The Beaux' Stratagem, and of five or six other comedies, was a native of Ireland, in which country Congreve also spent his childhood and boyhood. Farquhar's first play, his Love in a Bottle, was brought out with great success at Drury Lane in 1698; The Beaux' Stratagem, his last, was in the midst of its run when the illness during which it had been written terminated in the poor author's early death. The thoughtless and volatile, but good-natured and generous, character of Farquhar is reflected in his comedies, which, with less sparkle, have more natural life and airiness, and are animated by a finer spirit of whim, than those of either Vanbrugh or Congreve. His morality, like theirs, is abundantly free and easy; but there is much more heart about his profligacy than in theirs, as well as much less grossness or hardness.

To these names may be added that of Colley Cibber, who has, however, scarcely any pretensions to be ranked as one of our classic dramatists, although, of about two dozen comedies, tragedies, and other pieces of which he is the author, his Careless Husband and one or two others may be admitted to be lively and agreeable. Cibber, who was born in 1671, produced his first play, the comedy of Love's Last Shift, in 1696, and was still an occasional writer for the stage after the commencement of the reign of George II.; one of his productions, indeed, his

tragedy entitled Papal Tyranny, was brought out so late as the year 1745, when he himself performed one of the principal characters; and he lived till 1757. His well-known account of his own life, or his Apology for his Life, as he modestly or affectedly calls it, is an amusing piece of something higher than gossip; the sketches he gives of the various celebrated actors of his time are many of them executed, not perhaps with the deepest insight, but yet with much graphic skill in so far as regards those mere superficial characteristics that meet the ordinary eye.

The chief tragic writer of this age was Nicholas Rowe, the author of The Fair Penitent and Jane Shore, of five other tragedies, one comedy, and a translation in rhyme of Lucan's Pharsalia. Rowe, who was born in 1673, and died in 1718, was esteemed in his own day a great master of the pathetic, but is now regarded as little more than a smooth and occasionally sounding versifier.

Minor Poets.

The age of the first two Georges, if we put aside what was done by Pope, or consider him as belonging properly to the preceding reign of Anne, was not very prolific in poetry of a high order; but there are several minor poets belonging to this time whose names live in our literature, and some of whose productions are still read. Matthew Green's poem entitled The Spleen originally appeared, we believe, in his lifetime in the first volume of Dodsley's Collection—although his other pieces, which are few in number and of little note, were only published by his friend Glover after the death of the author in 1737, at the age of forty-one. The Spleen, a reflective effusion in octo-syllabic verse, is somewhat striking from an air of originality in the vein of thought, and from the laboured concentration and epigrammatic point of the language; but, although it was much cried up when it first appeared, and the laudation has continued to be duly echoed by succeeding formal criticism, it may be doubted if many readers could now make their way through it without considerable fatigue, or if it be much read in fact at all. With all its ingenious or energetic rhetorical posture-making, it has nearly as little real play of fancy as charm of numbers, and may be most properly characterized as a piece of

bastard or perverted Hudibrastic—an imitation of the manner of Butler to the very dance of his verse, only without the comedy —the same antics, only solemnized or made to carry a moral and serious meaning. The Grongar Hill of Dyer was published in 1726, when its author was in his twenty-seventh year; and was followed by The Ruins of Rome in 1740, and his most elaborate performance, The Fleece, in 1757, the year before his death. Dyer's is a natural and true note, though not one of much power or compass. What he has written is his own; not borrowed from or suggested by "others' books," but what he has himself seen, thought, and felt. He sees, too, with an artistic eye—while at the same time his pictures are full of the moral inspiration which alone makes description poetry. There is also considerable descriptive power in Somervile's blank verse poem of The Chase, in four Books, which was first published in 1735. Somervile, who was a Warwickshire squire, and the intimate friend of Shenstone, and who, besides his Chase, wrote various other pieces, now for the most part forgotten, died in 1742. Tickell, Addison's friend, who was born in 1686 and lived till 1740, is the author of a number of compositions, of which his Elegy on Addison and his ballad of Colin and Lucy are the best known. The ballad Gray has called "the prettiest in the world"—and if prettiness, by which Gray here probably means a certain easy simplicity and trimness, were the soul of ballad poetry, it might carry away a high prize. Nobody writes better grammar than Tickell. His style is always remarkably clear and exact, and the mere appropriateness and judicious collocation of the words, aided by the swell of the verse in his more elaborate or solemn passages, have sometimes an imposing effect. Of his famous Elegy, the most opposite opinions have been expressed. Goldsmith has called it "one of the finest in our language;" and Johnson has declared that "a more sublime or elegant funeral poem is not to be found in the whole compass of English literature." So Lord Macaulay:—"Tickell bewailed his friend in an Elegy which would do honour to the greatest name in our literature, and which unites the energy and magnificence of Dryden to the tenderness and purity of Cowper."* Steele on the other hand has denounced it as being nothing more than "prose in rhyme." And it must be admitted that it is neither very tender nor very imaginative; yet rhyme

* Essay on Addison.

too is part and parcel of poetry, and solemn thoughts, vigorously expressed and melodiously enough versified, which surely we have here, cannot reasonably be refused that name, even though the informing power of passion or imagination may not be present in any very high degree. One of Tickell's most spirited performances is perhaps his imitation or parody of Horace's Prophecy of Nereus (Book i. Ode 15), which he thus applied at the time to the Jacobite outbreak of 1715:—

As Mar his round one morning took
(Whom some call Earl and some call Duke),
And his new brethren of the blade,
Shivering with fear and frost, surveyed,
On Perth's bleak hills he chanced to spy
An aged wizard six feet high,
With bristled hair and visage blighted,
Wall-eyed, bare-haunched, and second sighted.
The grisly sage in thought profound
Beheld the chief with back so round,
Then rolled his eye-balls to and fro
O'er his paternal hills of snow;
And into these tremendous speeches
Broke forth the prophet without breeches:—
"Into what ills betrayed by thee
This ancient kingdom do I see!
Her realms unpeopled and forlorn!
Woe's me! that ever thou wert born;
Proud English loons (our clans o'ercome)
On Scottish pads shall amble home:
I see them drest in bonnets blue
(The spoils of thy rebellious crew);
I see the target cast away,
And checkered plaid, become their prey—
The checkered plaid to make a gown
For many a lass in London town.
"In vain thy hungry mountaineers
Come forth in all their warlike geers,
The shield, the pistol, dirk and dagger,
In which they daily wont to swagger,
And oft have sallied out to pillage
The hen-roosts of some peaceful village,
Or, while their neighbours were asleep,
Have carried off a lowland sheep.
"What boots thy highborn host of beggars,
Macleans, Mackenzies, and Macgregors,
With popish cut-throats, perjured ruffians,
And Foster's troop of ragamuffins?

"In vain thy lads around thee bandy,
Inflamed with bag-pipe and with brandy.
Doth not bold Sutherland the trusty,
With heart so true, and voice so rusty,
(A loyal soul) thy troops affright,
While hoarsely he demands the fight?
Dost thou not generous Ilay dread,
The bravest hand, the wisest head?
Undaunted dost thou hear the alarms
Of hoary Athol sheathed in arms?
"Douglas, who draws his lineage down
From thanes and peers of high renown,
Fiery, and young, and uncontrolled,
With knights, and squires, and barons bold,
(His noble household-band) advances,
And on the milk-white courser prances.
Thee Forfar to the combat dares,
Grown swarthy in Iberian wars;
And Monroe, kindled into rage,
Sourly defies thee to engage;
He 'll rout thy foot, though ne'er so many,
And horse to boot—if thou hast any.
"But see Argyle, with watchful eyes,
Lodged in his deep entrenchments lies;
Couched like a lion in thy way,
He waits to spring upon his prey;
While, like a herd of timorous deer,
Thy army shakes and pants with fear,
Led by their doughty general's skill
From frith to frith, from hill to hill.
"Is thus thy haughty promise paid
That to the Chevalier was made,
When thou didst oaths and duty barter
For dukedom, generalship, and garter?
Three moons thy Jemmy shall command,
With Highland sceptre in his hand,
Too good for his pretended birth—
Then down shall fall the King of Perth."

. . . . . .

The notorious Richard Savage is the author of several poetical compositions, published in the last fifteen or twenty years of his tempestuous and unhappy life, which he closed in Bristol jail in 1743, at the age of forty-six. Savage's poem called The Bastard has some vigorous lines, and some touches of tenderness as well as bursts of more violent passion; but, as a whole, it is crude, spasmodic, and frequently wordy and languid. His other compositions, some of which evince a talent for satire, of which

assiduous cultivation might have made something, have all passed into oblivion. The personal history of Savage, which Johnson's ardent and expanded narrative has made universally known, is more interesting than his verse; but even that owes more than half its attraction to his biographer. He had, in fact, all his life, apparently, much more of another kind of madness than he ever had of that of poetry.

Fenton and Broome—the former of whom died in 1730 at the age of forty-seven, the latter in 1745, at what age is not known, —are chiefly remembered as Pope's coadjutors in his translation of the Odyssey. Johnson observes, in his Life of Fenton, that the readers of poetry have never been able to distinguish their Books from those of Pope; but the account he has given here and in the Life of Broome of the respective shares of the three, on the information, as he says, of Mr. Langton, who had got it from Spence, may be reasonably doubted. It differs, indeed, in some respects from that given in Spence's Anecdotes, since published. A critical reader will detect very marked varieties of style and manner in the different parts of the work. It is very clear, for instance, that the nineteenth and twentieth Books are not by Pope, and have not even received much of his revision: they are commonly attributed to Fenton, and we should think rightly. But it is impossible to believe, on the other hand, that the translator of these two Books is also the translator of the whole of the fourth Book, which is likewise assigned to Fenton in Johnson's statement. Could any one except Pope have written the following lines, which occur in that Book?—

> But, oh, beloved by heaven, reserved to thee,
> A happier lot the smiling fates decree;
> Free from that law, beneath whose mortal sway
> Matter is changed, and varying forms decay,
> Elysium shall be thine; the blissful plains
> Of utmost earth, where Rhadamanthus reigns.
> Joys ever young, unmixed with pain or fear,
> Fill the wide circle of the eternal year:
> Stern winter smiles on that auspicious clime,
> The fields are florid with unfading prime;
> From the bleak pole no winds inclement blow,
> Mould the round hail, or flake the fleecy snow;
> But from the breezy deep the bless'd inhale
> The fragrant murmurs of the western gale.
> This grace peculiar will the Gods afford
> To thee, the son of Jove, the beauteous Helen's lord.

Pope, indeed, may have inserted this and other passages in this and other Books, of which he did not translate the whole. Broome was a much more dexterous versifier than Fenton, and would come much nearer to Pope's ordinary manner: still we greatly doubt if the twenty-third Book in particular (which passes for Broome's) be not entirely Pope's, and also many parts of the second, the eighth, the eleventh, and the twelfth. On the other hand, the thirteenth, fourteenth, fifteenth, and twenty-fourth seem to us to be throughout more likely to be by him than by Pope. Pope himself seems to have looked upon Broome as rather a clever mimic of his own manner than as anything much higher. When they had quarrelled a few years after this, he introduced his old associate in the Dunciad, in a passage which originally ran:—

> See under Ripley rise a new Whitehall,
> While Jones and Boyle's united labours fall;
> While Wren with sorrow to the grave descends,
> Gay dies unpensioned with a hundred friends;
> Hibernian politics, O Swift, thy doom,
> And Pope's, translating ten whole years with Broome.

It was pretended, indeed, in a note, that no harm was meant to poor Broome by this delicate crucifixion of him. Yet he is understood to be the W. B. who, in the sixth chapter of the Art of Sinking in Poetry, entitled "Of the several kinds of geniuses in the Profound, and the marks and characters of each," heads the list of those described as "the Parrots, that repeat another's words in such a hoarse, odd voice, as makes them seem their own." And Broome, as Johnson has observed, is quoted more than once in the treatise as a proficient in the Bathos. Johnson adds, "I have been told that they were afterwards reconciled; but I am afraid their peace was without friendship." The couplet in the Dunciad, at least, was ultimately altered to—

> Hibernian politics, O Swift! thy fate,
> And Pope's, ten years to comment and translate.

Both Broome and Fenton published also various original compositions in verse, but nothing that the world has not very willingly let die. Fenton, however, although his contributions to the translation of the Odyssey neither harmonize well with the rest of the work, nor are to be commended taken by themselves, had more force and truth of poetical feeling than many of his verse-making contemporaries: one of his pieces, his ode to Lord Gower, is not unmusical, nor without a certain lyric glow and elevation.

Another small poet of this age is Ambrose Philips, whose Six Pastorals and tragedy of The Distressed Mother brought him vast reputation when they were first produced, but whose name has been kept in the recollection of posterity, perhaps, more by Pope's vindictive satire. An ironical criticism on the Pastorals in the Guardian, which took in Steele, who published it in the 40th number of that paper (for 27th April, 1713), was followed long afterwards by the unsparing ridicule of the Treatise on the Art of Sinking in Poetry, in which many of the illustrations are taken from the rhymes of poor Philips, who is held up in one place as the great master both of the infantine and the inane in style, and is elsewhere placed at the head of the clan of writers designated the Tortoises, who are described as slow and dull, and, like pastoral writers, delighting much in gardens: "they have," it is added, "for the most part, a fine embroidered shell, and underneath it a heavy lump.* Philips, in some of his later effusions, had gone, in pursuit of what he conceived to be nature and simplicity, into a style of writing in short verses with not overmuch meaning, which his enemies parodied under the name of Namby-pamby. On the whole, however, he had no great reason to complain: if his poetry was laughed at by Pope and the Tories, it was both lauded, and very substantially rewarded, by the Whigs, who not only made Philips a lottery commissioner and a justice of peace for Westminster, but continued to push him forward till he became member for the county of Armagh in the Irish parliament, and afterwards judge of the Irish Prerogative Court. His success in life is alluded to in the same part of the Dunciad where Broome is brought in—in the line,

Lo! Ambrose Philips is preferred for wit!

This *Namby-pamby* Philips, who was born in 1671 and lived till 1749, must not be confounded with John Philips, the author of the mock-heroic poem of The Splendid Shilling (published in 1703), and also of a poem in two books, in serious blank verse, entitled Cider, which has the reputation of being a good practical

* According to Johnson, Gay's Pastorals were written at Pope's instigation, in ridicule of those of Philips; "but," it is added, "the effect of reality and truth became conspicuous, even when the intention was to show them grovelling and degraded. These Pastorals became popular, and were read with delight, as just representations of rural manners and occupations, by those who had no interest in the rivalry of the poets, nor knowledge of the critical dispute."—Life of Gay.

treatise on the brewing of that drink. John Philips, who published likewise a poem on the battle of Blenheim, in rivalry of Addison, was a Tory poet, and the affectation of simplicity, at least, cannot be laid to his charge, for what he aims at imitating or appropriating is not what is called the language of nature, but the swell and pomp of Milton. His serious poetry, however, is not worth much, at least as poetry. John Philips was born in 1676, and died in 1708.

Two or three more names may be merely mentioned. Leonard Welsted, who was born in 1689, and died in 1747, also, like Ambrose Philips, figures in the Dunciad and in the Treatise of Martinus Scriblerus, and produced a considerable quantity both of verse and prose, all now utterly forgotten. Thomas Yalden, who died a Doctor of Divinity in 1736, was a man of wit as well as the writer of a number of odes, elegies, hymns, fables, and other compositions in verse, of which one, entitled a Hymn to Darkness, is warmly praised by Dr. Johnson, who has given the author a place in his Lives of the Poets. In that work too may be found an account of Hammond, the author of the Love Elegies, who died in 1742, in his thirty-second year, driven mad, and eventually sent to his grave, it is affirmed, by the inexorable cruelty of the lady, a Miss Dashwood, who, under the name of Delia, is the subject of his verses, and who, we are told, survived him for thirty-seven years without finding any one else either to marry or fall in love with her. The character, as Johnson remarks, that Hammond bequeathed her was not likely to attract courtship. Hammond's poetry, however, reflects but coldly the amorous fire which produced all this mischief; it is correct and graceful, but languid almost to the point of drowsiness. Gilbert West was born about 1705, and died in 1756: besides other verse, he published a translation of a portion of the odes of Pindar, which had long considerable reputation, but is not very Pindaric, though a smooth and sonorous performance. The one of his works that has best kept its ground is his prose tract entitled Observations on the Resurrection, a very able and ingenious disquisition, for which the university of Oxford made West a Doctor of Laws. Aaron Hill, who was born in 1685 and died in 1750, and who lies buried in Westminster Abbey, was at different periods of his life a traveller, a projector, a theatrical manager, and a literary man. He is the author of no fewer than seventeen dramatic pieces, original and translated, among

which his versions of Voltaire's Zaire and Merope long kept possession of the stage. His poetry is in general both pompous and empty enough; and of all he has written, almost the only passage that is now much remembered is a satiric sketch of Pope, in a few lines, which have some imitative smartness, but scarcely any higher merit. Pope had offended him by putting him in the Dunciad, though the way in which he is mentioned is really complimentary to Hill. A good view of the character of Aaron Hill, who was an amiable and honourable man, although he overrated his own talents and importance, is to be got from the published correspondence of Richardson the novelist, in the first of the six volumes of which Hill's letters, extending from the year 1730 to 1748, fill about 130 pages. Mrs. Barbauld, by whom the collection was prepared for the press, was not aware that in publishing two of these letters of Hill's, those inserted at pp. 53 and 55, she was letting out a literary secret. The letters, as given by her, are mutilated; but they are in part the same with those published by Richardson himself at the head of the second edition of his Pamela, as from "a gentleman of the most distinguished taste and abilities"—"an incomparable writer," &c., in which both that work and its author are extolled in a way that must have left the most inordinate vanity nothing to desire. The laudation, however, as we see, was liberally repaid on Richardson's part: if Pamela was unequalled among books, Pamela's critic was incomparable among writers: there was a fair interchange between the parties. Perhaps, however, if it had been announced that the incomparable critic and fine writer was only Aaron Hill, the effect designed to be produced on the public mind might have been somewhat damaged.

Collins; Shenstone; Gray.

By far the greatest of all the poetical writers of this age who, from the small quantity of their productions, or the brevity of each of them separately considered, are styled minor poets, is Collins. William Collins, born in 1720, died at the early age of thirty-six, and nearly all his poetry had been written ten years before his death. His volume of Odes, descriptive and allegorical, was published in 1746; his Oriental Eclogues had appeared some years before, while he was a student at Oxford. Only his

unfinished Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlanders was found among his papers after his death, and it is dated 1749. The six or seven last years of his short life were clouded with a depression of spirits which made intellectual exertion impossible. All that Collins has written is full of imagination, pathos, and melody. The defect of his poetry in general is that there is too little of earth in it: in the purity and depth of its beauty it resembles the bright blue sky. Yet Collins had genius enough for anything; and in his ode entitled The Passions he has shown with how strong a voice and pulse of humanity he could, when he chose, animate his verse, and what extensive and enduring popularity he could command.

Gray and Shenstone were both born before Collins, though they both outlived him,—Shenstone dying at the age of fifty in 1763, Gray at that of fifty-five in 1771. Shenstone is remembered for his Pastoral Ballad, his Schoolmistress, and an elegy or two; but there was very little potency of any kind in the music of his slender oaten pipe. Gray's famous Elegy written in a Country Churchyard, his two Pindarics, his Ode on Eton College, his Long Story, some translations from the Norse and Welsh, and a few other short pieces, which make up his contributions to the poetry of his native language, are all admirable for their exquisite finish, nor is a true poetical spirit ever wanting, whatever may be thought of the form in which it is sometimes embodied. When his two celebrated compositions, The Progress of Poesy and The Bard, appeared together in 1757, Johnson affirms that "the readers of poetry were at first content to gaze in mute amazement;" and, although the difficulty or impossibility of understanding them which was then, it seems, felt and confessed, is no longer complained of, much severe animadversion has been passed on them on other accounts. Still, whatever objections may be made to the artificial and unnatural character and over-elaboration of their style, the gorgeous brocade of the verse does not hide the true fire and fancy beneath, or even the real elegance of taste that has arrayed itself so ambitiously. But Gray often expresses himself, too, as naturally and simply in his poetry as he always does in his charming Letters and other writings in prose: the most touching of the verses in his Ode to Eton College, for instance, are so expressed; and in his Long Story he has given the happiest proof of his mastery over the lightest graces and gaieties of song.

YOUNG; THOMSON.

Of the remaining poetical names of this age the two most considerable are those of Young and Thomson. Dr. Edward Young, the celebrated author of the Night Thoughts, was born in 1681 and lived till 1765. He may be shortly characterized as, at least in manner, a sort of successor, under the reign of Pope and the new style established by him and Dryden, of the Donnes and the Cowleys of a former age. He had nothing, however, of Donne's subtle fancy, and as little of the gaiety and playfulness that occasionally break out among the quibbles and contortions of Cowley. On the other hand, he has much more passion and pathos than Cowley, and, with less elegance, perhaps makes a nearer approach in some of his greatest passages to the true sublime. But his style is radically an affected and false one; and of what force it seems to possess, the greater part is the result not of any real principle of life within it, but of mere strutting and straining. Nothing can be more unlike the poetry of the Night Thoughts than that of the Seasons. If Young is all art and effort, Thomson is all negligence and nature; so negligent, indeed, that he pours forth his unpremeditated song apparently without the thought ever occurring to him that he could improve it by any study or elaboration, any more than if he were some winged warbler of the woodlands, seeking and caring for no other listener except the universal air which the strain made vocal. As he is the poet of nature, so his poetry has all the intermingled rudeness and luxuriance of its theme. There is no writer who has drunk in more of the inmost soul of his subject. If it be the object of descriptive poetry to present us with pictures and visions the effect of which shall vie with that of the originals from which they are drawn, then Thomson is the greatest of all descriptive poets; for there is no other who surrounds us with so much of the truth of Nature, or makes us feel so intimately the actual presence and companionship of all her hues and fragrances. His spring blossoms and gives forth its beauty like a daisied meadow; and his summer landscapes have all the sultry warmth and green luxuriance of June; and his harvest fields and his orchards "hang the heavy head" as if their fruitage were indeed embrowning in the sun; and we see and hear the driving of his winter snows, as if the air around us

were in confusion with their uproar. The beauty and purity of imagination, also, diffused over the melodious stanzas of the Castle of Indolence, make that poem one of the gems of the language. Thomson, whose Winter, the first portion of his Seasons, was published in 1726, died in 1748, in his forty-eighth year. Two years before had died his countryman, the Rev. Robert Blair, born in 1699, the author of the well-known poem in blank verse called The Grave, said to have been first published in 1743. It is remarkable for its masculine vigour of thought and expression, and for the imaginative solemnity with which it invests the most familiar truths; and it has always been one of our most popular religious poems.

ARMSTRONG; AKENSIDE; WILKIE; GLOVER.

Among the more eminent, again, of the second-rate writers of longer poems about this date, the latter part of the reign of George II., immediately after the death of Pope, may be noticed Dr. John Armstrong, who was born in Scotland in 1709, and whose Art of Preserving Health, published in 1744, has the rare merit of an original and characteristic style, distinguished by raciness and manly grace; and Dr. Mark Akenside, likewise a physician, the author, at the age of twenty-three, of The Pleasures of Imagination, published in the same year with Armstrong's poem, and giving another example of the treatment of a didactic subject in verse with great ingenuity and success. Akenside's rich, though diffuse, eloquence, and the store of fanciful illustration which he pours out, evidence a wonderfully full mind for so young a man. Neither Akenside nor Armstrong published any more verse after the accession of George III.; though the former lived till 1770, and the latter till 1779. Wilkie, the author of the rhyming epic called The Epigoniad, who was a Scotch clergyman and professor of natural philosophy at St. Andrews, would also appear from the traditionary accounts we have of him to have been a person of some genius as well as learning, though in composing his said epic he seems not to have gone much farther for his model or fount of inspiration than to the more sonorous passages of Pope's Homer. The Epigoniad, published in 1753, can scarcely be said to have in any proper sense of the word long survived its author, who died in 1772.

Nor probably was Glover's blank verse epic of Leonidas, which appeared so early as 1737, much read when he himself passed away from among men, in the year 1785, at the age of seventy-four—although it had had a short day of extraordinary popularity, and is a performance of considerable rhetorical merit. Glover, who was a merchant of London, and distinguished as a city political leader on the liberal side (a circumstance which helped the temporary success of his epic), also wrote two tragedies, Boadicea, which was brought out in 1753; Medea, which appeared in 1761: they have the reputation of being cold and declamatory, and have both been long ago consigned to oblivion. He is best remembered for his ballad of Admiral Hosier's Ghost —which he wrote when he was seven-and-twenty, and was accustomed, it seems, to sing to the end of his life,—though Hannah More, who tells us she heard him sing it in his last days, is mistaken in saying that he was then past eighty.

Scottish Poetry.

Thomson was the first Scotsman who won any conspicuous place for himself in English literature. He had been preceded, indeed, in the writing of English by two or three others of his countrymen; by Drummond of Hawthornden, who has been mentioned in a preceding page, and his contemporaries—the Earl of Stirling, who is the author of several rhyming tragedies and other poems, well versified, but not otherwise of much poetical merit, published between 1603 and 1637, the Earl of Ancrum, by whom we have some sonnets and other short pieces, and Sir Robert Ayton, to whom is commonly attributed the well-known song, "I do confess thou'rt smooth and fair," and who is also the author of a considerable number of other similar effusions, many of them of superior polish and elegance.* At a later date, too, Sir George Mackenzie, as already noticed, had written some English prose; as, indeed, Drummond had also done, besides his poetry. But none of these writers, belonging to the century

* Large additions have been made to the previously known poetry of this writer by the discovery, some years ago, of a manuscript volume of his compositions, the contents of which have since been given to the world through the press by its possessor, Dr. J. Roger, of Denino, Fifeshire.

that followed the union of the crowns, can be considered as having either acquired any high or diffused reputation in his own time, or retained much hold upon posterity. Even Drummond is hardly remembered as anything more than a respectable sonnetteer; his most elaborate work, his prose History of the Jameses, has passed into as complete general oblivion as the tragedies and epics of Lord Stirling and the Essays of Sir George Mackenzie. If there be any other writer born in Scotland of earlier date than Thomson, who has still a living and considerable name among English authors, it is Bishop Burnet; but those of his literary performances by which he continues to be chiefly remembered, however important for the facts they contain, have scarcely any literary value. Leighton, the eloquent archbishop of Glasgow, although of Scotch descent, was himself born in London. The poetry of Thomson was the first produce of the next era, in which the two countries were really made one by their union under one legislature, and English became the literary language of the one part of the island as much as of the other.

The Scottish dialect, however, still continued to be employed in poetry. The great age of Scottish poetry, as we have seen, extends from about the beginning of the fifteenth to about the middle of the sixteenth century, the succession of distinguished names comprehending, among others, those of James I., and Henderson, and Holland, and Henry the Minstrel, and Gawin Douglas, and Dunbar, and Sir David Lyndsay.* It is remarkable that this space of a hundred and fifty years exactly corresponds to the period of the decay and almost extinction of poetry in England which intervenes between Chaucer and Surrey. On the other hand, with the revival of English poetry in the latter part of the sixteenth century the voice of Scottish song almost died away. The principal names of the writers of Scottish verse that occur for a hundred and fifty years after the death of Lyndsay are those of Alexander Scot, who was Lyndsay's contemporary, but probably survived him, and who is the author of several short amatory compositions, which have procured him from Pinkerton the designation of the Scottish Anacreon; Sir Richard Maitland of Lethington, who died at a great age in 1586, and is less memorable as a poet than as a collector and preserver of poetry, the two famous manuscript volumes in the Pepysian Library,

* See vol. i. pp. 317—331, and 380—390.

in which are found the only existing copies of so many curious old pieces, having been compiled under his direction, although his own compositions, which have, with proper piety, been printed by the Maitland Club at Glasgow, are also of some bulk, and are creditable to his good feeling and good sense; Captain Alexander Montgomery, whose allegory of The Cherry and the Slae, published in 1597, is remarkable for the facility and flow of the language, and long continued a popular favourite, its peculiar metre (which, however, is of earlier origin than this poem) having been on several occasions adopted by Burns; and Alexander Hume, who was a clergyman and died in 1609, having published a volume of Hymns, or Sacred Songs, in his native dialect, in 1599. Other Scottish poets of the sixteenth century, of whom nothing or next to nothing is known except the names, and a few short pieces attributed to some of them, are John Maitland Lord Thirlstane (second son of Sir Richard), Alexander Arbuthnot, who was a clergyman, Clapperton, Flemyng, John Blyth, Moffat, Fethy, Balnavis, Sempil, Norval, Allan Watson, George Bannatyne (the writer of the Bannatyne manuscript in the Advocates' Library), who was a canon of the cathedral of Moray, and Wedderburn, the supposed author of the Compendious Book of Godly and Spiritual Songs, of which the first edition in all probability appeared in the latter part of this century, and also, according to one theory, of The Complaint of Scotland, published in 1548.* But it is possible that some of these names may belong to a date anterior to that of Lyndsay. King James, also, before his accession to the English throne, published in Edinburgh two collections of Scottish verse by himself; the first, in 1585, entitled The Essays of a Prentice in the Divine Art of Poesy; the other, in 1591, His Majesty's Poetical Exercises at vacant hours; but the royal inspiration is peculiarly weak and flat.

In the whole course, we believe, of the seventeenth century not even the name of a Scottish poet or versifier occurs. The next that appeared was Allan Ramsay, who was the contemporary of Thomson, and must be accounted the proper successor of Sir David Lyndsay, after the lapse of more than a century and a half. Ramsay was born in 1686, and lived till 1758. He belongs to the order of self-taught poets, his original profession having been that of a barber; his first published per-

* See vol. i. p. 422.

formance, his clever continuation of the old poem of Christ's Kirk on the Green (attributed by some to James I. of Scotland, by others to James V.) appeared in 1712; his Gentle Shepherd, in 1725; and he produced besides numerous songs and other shorter pieces from time to time. Ramsay's verse is in general neither very refined nor very imaginative, but it has always more or less in it of true poetic life. His lyrics, with all their frequent coarseness, are many of them full of rustic hilarity and humour; and his well-known pastoral, though its dramatic pretensions otherwise are slender enough, for nature and truth both in the characters and manners may rank with the happiest compositions of its class.

To this same age of the revival of Scottish poetry also belongs nearly the whole of that remarkable body of national song known as the Jacobite minstrelsy, forming altogether as animated and powerful an expression of the popular feeling, in all its varieties of pathos, humour, indignation, and scorn, as has anywhere else been embodied in verse. It is almost all anonymous, too, as if it had actually sprung from the general heart of the people, or formed itself spontaneously in the air of the land. Probably some of the many other Scottish songs and ballads no authors of which are known may have been produced among the peasantry themselves, even during the long interval of the first hundred years after the union of the crowns, to which there belongs no name of a Scottish poet, nor any poetry written or printed in that dialect. It is reasonable to suppose that Allan Ramsay must have had a line of predecessors of his own class, and that in this way the stream of native song flowed as it were underground, or hidden among the herbage, from its disappearance with Lyndsay till it re-emerged in him. But it was the exile of the old royal family, followed by the two successive romantic attempts of their adherents to restore them to the throne, that first blew again into a blaze the fire of poetry that lived in the national heart, and enabled it to break through the rigorous incrustment under which it had been oppressed and all but extinguished ever since the Reformation. This was the first decided revolt of the spirit of poetry against that of presbytery.

And to the earlier part of the last century, too, it would appear, we are in all probability to assign the best and most celebrated of those tragic ballads of Scotland which ever since the publication of Percy's Reliques, in which some of them were

inserted, have engaged so much attention, and, more especially since they have been more carefully collected and illustrated by Sir Walter Scott and succeeding editors, have been generally held to constitute the chief glory of the ancient popular minstrelsy of that country. Of one of them, indeed, and that perhaps the most renowned of them all, the ballad of Hardyknute, the alleged antiquity was questioned very early after its first appearance in Percy's work. Even Pinkerton, who reprinted it in his Select Ballads (1781), and is indignant that any one should suppose it to be of more recent origin than the fifteenth century, admits that "at the same time the language must convince us that many strokes have been bestowed by modern hands." In our day the genuineness of this production as a relique of antiquity has been almost universally given up; Scott himself, although he continued to the end of his life to admire it enthusiastically as an imitation, admits it in the Introduction to his Minstrelsy of the Border to be "evidently modern." But in this case there was positive external evidence of the recent production of the poem. If doubts were ever expressed in regard to any of the other ballads, they were founded solely on some expressions which were indisputably modern; and any suspicions thence arising were held to apply only to the particular verses or lines in which the non-antique phraseology occurred. These were corruptions, or possibly interpolations; that was all. But the question has lately been taken up by Mr. Chambers, and placed in quite a new light.* Mr. Chambers has not only, by a much more thorough examination of the principal ballads than they had ever before been subjected to, shown to how great an extent their language is only an imitation of the antique; he has further, by comparing them with one another, detected such a similarity, and such a pervading peculiarity of character, in all of them, in respect both of the diction and of the manner in which the subject is treated in each, as goes far to make it probable that they are all the production of one age and even of one and the same author. His conclusion is, that Sir Patrick Spence, Gill Maurice, Young Waters, Fause Foudrage, and others, were in all likelihood composed, either entirely or in some instances, it may be, on the basis of a comparatively rude and slight original, by the same Elizabeth Lady Wardlaw

* Edinburgh Papers, by Robert Chambers, F.R.S.E., &c. The Romantic Scottish Ballads: their Epoch and Authorship. 8vo. Edin. 1859, pp. 46.

(wife of Sir Henry Wardlaw, Baronet, of Pitreavie, in Fifeshire, and daughter of Sir Charles Halket, Baronet, of Pitfirran, in the same county), to whom it has long been generally acknowledged that we owe Hardyknute, and who died, at the age of fifty, so lately as in 1727. Mr. David Laing had, in a note to the reprint of Johnson's Scots' Musical Museum (1839), intimated a suspicion that Hardyknute and Sir Patrick Spence were by the same author. But the newest and perhaps the most striking part of Mr. Chambers's argument is that in which he urges, in confutation of the alleged antiquity of these and the other ballads, not only the traces which they everywhere present of the fashionable poetical phraseology of the early part of the last century, but the remarkable fact that we have not a particle of positive evidence for their existence before that date—no copies of them either in print or in manuscript, nor so much as a mention of or allusion to any one of them in our earlier literature. "They are not," it is forcibly observed, "in the style of old literature. They contain no references to old literature. As little does old literature contain any references to them." This is the more extraordinary when we consider the vast amount of attention they have attracted since they were first brought forward by Percy in his Reliques. They may not very unreasonably be thought, Mr. Chambers remarks, to have done more to make the popularity of that collection than all its other contents. It has been common to attribute to Percy's book a large share in the new inspiration which soon after its appearance began to show itself in our poetry. Mr. Chambers winds up with a more pointed deduction. "If," he says, "there be any truth or force in this speculation, I shall be permitted to indulge in the idea that a person lived a hundred years before Scott, who, with his feeling for Scottish history, and the features of the past generally, constructed out of these materials a similar romantic literature. In short, Scotland appears to have had a Scott a hundred years before the actual person so named. And we may well believe that, if we had not had the first, we either should not have had the second, or he would have been something considerably different, for, beyond question, Sir Walter's genius was fed and nurtured on the ballad literature of his native country. From his Old Mortality and Waverley back to his Lady of the Lake and Marmion; from these to his Lay of the Last Minstrel; from that to his Eve of St. John and Glenfinlas;

and from these, again, to the ballads which he collected, mainly the produce (as I surmise) of an individual precursor, is a series of steps easily traced, and which no one will dispute. Much significance there is, indeed, in his own statement that Hardyknute was the first poem he ever learned, and the last he should forget. Its author—if my suspicion be correct—was his literary foster-mother, and we probably owe the direction of his genius, and all its fascinating results, primarily to her."

The Novelists, Richardson, Fielding, Smollett.

A very remarkable portion of the literature of the middle of the last century is the body of prose fiction, the authors of which we familiarly distinguish as the modern English novelists, and which in some respects may be said still to stand apart from everything in the language produced either before or since. If there be any writer entitled to step in before Richardson and Fielding in claiming the honour of having originated the English novel, it is Daniel Defoe. But, admirable as Defoe is for his inventive power and his art of narrative, he can hardly be said to have left us any diversified picture of the social life of his time, and he is rather a great *raconteur* than a novelist, strictly and properly so called. He identifies himself, indeed, as perfectly as any writer ever did, with the imaginary personages whose adventures he details;—but still it is adventures he deals with rather than either manners or characters. It may be observed that there is seldom or ever anything peculiar or characteristic in the language of his heroes and heroines: some of them talk, or write, through whole volumes, but all in the same style; in fact, as to this matter, every one of them is merely a repetition of Defoe himself. Nor even in professed dialogue is he happy in individualizing his characters by their manner of expressing themselves; there may be the employment occasionally of certain distinguishing phrases, but the adaptation of the speech to the speaker seldom goes much beyond such mere mechanical artifices; the heart and spirit do not flash out as they do in nature; we may remember Robinson Crusoe's man Friday by his broken English, but it is in connexion with the fortunes of their lives

only, of the full stream of incident and adventure upon which they are carried along, of the perils and perplexities in which they are involved, and the shifts they are put to, that we think of Colonel Jacque, or Moll Flanders, or even of Robinson Crusoe himself. What character they have to us is all gathered from the circumstances in which they are placed; very little or none of it from either the manner or the matter of their discourses. Even their conduct is for the most part the result of circumstances; any one of them acts, as well as speaks, very nearly as any other would have done similarly situated. Great and original as he is in his proper line, and admirable as the fictions with which he has enriched our literature are for their other merits, Defoe has created no character which lives in the national mind—no Squire Western, or Trulliber, or Parson Adams, or Strap, or Pipes, or Trunnion, or Lesmahago, or Corporal Trim, or Uncle Toby. He has made no attempt at any such delineation. It might be supposed that a writer able to place himself and his readers so completely in the midst of the imaginary scenes he describes would have excelled in treating a subject dramatically. But, in truth, his genius was not at all dramatic. With all his wonderful power of interesting us by the air of reality he throws over his fictions, and carrying us along with him whithersoever he pleases, he has no faculty of passing out of himself in the dramatic spirit, of projecting himself out of his own proper nature and being into those of the creations of his brain. However strong his conception was of other things, he had no strong conception of character. Besides, with all his imagination and invention, he had little wit and no humour—no remarkable skill in any other kind of representation except merely that of the plain literal truth of things. Vivid and even creative as his imagination was, it was still not poetical. It looked through no atmosphere of ideal light at anything; it saw nothing adorned, beautified, elevated above nature; its gift was to see the reality, and no more. Its pictures, therefore, partake rather of the character of fac-similes than that of works of art in the true sense.

On turning our eyes from his productions to those either of Fielding or Richardson, we feel at once the spell of quite another sort of inventive or creative power. Yet no two writers could well be more unlike than the two we have mentioned are to one another both in manner and in spirit. Intellectually and morally, by original constitution of mind as well as in the cir-

cumstances of their training and situation, the two great contemporary novelists stood opposed the one to the other in the most complete contrast. Fielding, a gentleman by birth, and liberally educated, had been a writer for the public from the time he was twenty: Richardson, who had nearly attained that age before Fielding came into the world (the one was born in 1689, the other in 1707), having begun life as a mechanic, had spent the greater part of it as a tradesman, and had passed his fiftieth year before he became an author. Yet, after they had entered upon the same new field of literature almost together, they found themselves rivals upon that ground for as long as either continued to write. To Richardson certainly belongs priority of date as a novelist: the first part of his Pamela was published in 1740, the conclusion in 1741; and Fielding's Joseph Andrews, originally conceived with the design of turning Richardson's work into ridicule, appeared in 1742. Thus, as if their common choice of the same species of writing, and their antipathies of nature and habit, had not been enough to divide them, it was destined that the two founders of the new school of fiction should begin their career by having a personal quarrel. For their works, notwithstanding all the remarkable points of dissimilarity between those of the one and those of the other, must still be considered as belonging to the same school or form of literary composition, and that a form which they had been the first to exemplify in our language. Unlike as Joseph Andrews was to Pamela, yet the two resembled each other more than either did any other English work of fiction. They were still our two first novels properly so called—our two first artistically constructed epics of real life. And the identity of the species of fictitious narrative cultivated by the two writers became more apparent as its character was more completely developed by their subsequent publications, and each proceeded in proving its capabilities in his own way, without reference to what had been done by the other. Fielding's Jonathan Wild appeared in 1743; Richardson's Clarissa Harlowe—the greatest of his works—was given to the world in 1748; and the next year the greatest birth of Fielding's genius—his Tom Jones—saw the light. Finally, Fielding's Amelia was published in 1751; and Richardson's Sir Charles Grandison in 1753. Fielding died at Lisbon in 1754, at the age of forty-seven; Richardson survived till 1761, but wrote nothing more.

Meanwhile, however, a third writer had presented himself upon the same field—Smollett, whose Roderick Random had appeared in 1748, his Peregrine Pickle in 1751, and his Count Fathom in 1754, when the energetic Scotsman was yet only in his thirty-fourth year. His Sir Launcelot Greaves followed in 1762, and his Humphrey Clinker in 1771, in the last year of the author's active life. Our third English novelist is as much a writer *sui generis* as either of his two predecessors, as completely distinguished from each of them in the general character of his genius as they are from each other. Of the three, Richardson had evidently by far the richest natural soil of mind; his defects sprung from deficiency of cultivation; his power was his own in the strictest sense; not borrowed from books, little aided even by experience of life, derived almost solely from introspection of himself and communion with his own heart. He alone of the three could have written what he did without having himself witnessed and lived through the scenes and characters described, or something like them which only required to be embellished and heightened, and otherwise artistically treated, in order to form an interesting and striking fictitious representation. Her fertility of invention, in the most comprehensive meaning of that term, is wonderful,—supplying him on all occasions with a copious stream both of incident and of thought that floods the page, and seems as if it might so flow on and diffuse itself for ever. Yet it must be confessed that he has delineated for us rather human nature than human life—rather the heart and its universal passions, as modified merely by a few broad distinctions of temperament, of education, of external circumstances, than those subtler idiosyncracies which constitute what we properly call character. Many characters, no doubt, there are set before us in his novels, very admirably drawn and discriminated: Pamela, her parents, Mr. B., Mrs. Jewkes, Clarissa, Lovelace, Miss Howe, Sir Charles Grandison, Miss Byron, Clementina, are all delineations of this description for the most part natural, well worked out, and supported by many happy touches: but (with the exception, perhaps, of the last mentioned) they can scarcely be called original conceptions of a high order, creations at once true to nature and new to literature; nor have they added to that population of the world of fiction among which every reader of books has many familiar acquaintances hardly less real to his fancy and feelings than any

he has met with in the actual world, and for the most part much more interesting. That which, besides the story, interests us in Richardson's novels, is not the characters of his personages but their sentiments—not their modes but their motives of action—the anatomy of their hearts and inmost natures, which is unfolded to us with so elaborate an inquisition and such matchless skill. Fielding, on the other hand, has very little of this, and Smollett still less. They set before us their pictures of actual life in much the same way as life itself would have set them before us if our experience had chanced to bring us into contact with the particular situations and personages delineated; we see, commonly, merely what we should have seen as lookers-on, not in the particular confidence of any of the figures in the scene; there are they all, acting or talking according to their various circumstances, habits, and humours, and we are welcome to look at them and listen to them as attentively as we please; but, if we want to know anything more of them than what is visible to all the world, we must find it out for ourselves in the best way we can, for neither they nor the author will ordinarily tell us a word of it. What both these writers have given us in their novels is for the most part their own actual experience of life, irradiated, of course, by the lights of fancy and genius, and so made something much more brilliant and attractive than it was in the reality, but still in its substance the product not of meditation but of observation chiefly. Even Fielding, with all his wit, or at least pregnancy of thought and style—for the quality in his writings to which we allude appears to be the result rather of elaboration than of instinctive perception—would probably have left us nothing much worth preserving in the proper form of a novel, if he had not had his diversified practical knowledge of society to drawn upon, and especially his extensive and intimate acquaintance with the lower orders of all classes, in painting whom he is always greatest and most at home. Within that field, indeed, he is the greatest of all our novelists. Yet he has much more refinement of literary taste than either Smollett or Richardson; and, indeed, of the works of all the three, his alone can be called classical works in reference to their formal character. Both his style and the construction of his stories display a care and artifice altogether unknown to the others, both of whom, writing on without plan or forethought, appear on all occasions to have made use alike

of the first words and the first incidents that presented themselves. Smollett, a practised writer for the press, had the command, indeed, of a style the fluency of which is far from being without force, or rhetorical parade either; but it is animated by no peculiar expressiveness, by no graces either of art or of nature. His power consists in the cordiality of his conception and the breadth and freedom of his delineation of the humorous, both in character and in situation. The feeling of the humorous in Smollett always overpowers, or at least has a tendency to overpower, the merely satirical spirit; which is not the case with Fielding, whose humour has generally a sly vein of satire running through it, even when it is most gay and genial.

Sterne.

But he to whom belongs the finest spirit of whim among all our writers of this class is the immortal author of The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy. Sterne, born in Ireland in 1713, had already published one or two unregarded sermons when the first and second volumes of his most singular novel were brought out at York in the year 1759. The third and fourth volumes followed in 1761; the fifth and sixth in 1762; the seventh and eighth not till 1765; the ninth in 1767. The six volumes of his Yorick's Sermons had also come out in pairs in the intervals; his Sentimental Journey appeared in 1768; and his death took place the same year. Sterne has been charged with imitation and plagiarism; but surely originality is the last quality that can be denied to him. To dispute his possession of that is much the same as it would be to deny that the sun is luminous because some spots have been detected upon its surface. If Sterne has borrowed or stolen some few things from other writers, at least no one ever had a better right to do so in virtue of the amount that there is in his writings of what is really his own. If he has been much indebted to any predecessor, it is to Rabelais; but, except in one or two detached episodes, he has wholly eschewed the extravagance and grotesqueness in which the genius of Rabelais loves to disport itself, and the tenderness and humanity that pervade his humour are quite unlike anything in the mirth of Rabelais. There is not much humour, indeed, anywhere out

of Shakespeare and Cervantes which resembles or can be compared with that of Sterne. It would be difficult to name any writer but one of these two who could have drawn Uncle Toby or Trim. Another common mistake about Sterne is, that the mass of what he has written consists of little better than nonsense or rubbish—that his beauties are but grains of gold glittering here and there in a heap of sand, or, at most, rare spots of green scattered over an arid waste. Of no writer could this be said with less correctness. Whatever he has done is wrought with the utmost care, and to the highest polish and perfection. With all his apparent caprices of manner, his language is throughout the purest idiomatic English; nor is there, usually, a touch in any of his pictures that could be spared without injury to the effect. And, in his great work, how completely brought out, how exquisitely finished, is every figure, from Uncle Toby, and Brother Shandy, and Trim, and Yorick, down to Dr. Slop, and Widow Wadman, and Mrs. Bridget, and Obadiah himself! Who would resign any one of them, or any part of any one of them?

Goldsmith.

It has been observed, with truth, that, although Richardson has on the whole the best claim to the title of inventor of the modern English novel, he never altogether succeeded in throwing off the inflation of the French romance, and representing human beings in the true light and shade of human nature. Undoubtedly the men and women of Fielding and Smollett are of more genuine flesh and blood than the elaborate heroes and heroines who figure in his pages. But both Fielding and Smollett, notwithstanding the fidelity as well as spirit of their style of drawing from real life, have for the most part confined themselves to some two or three departments of the wide field of social existence, rather abounding in strongly marked peculiarities of character than furnishing a fair representation of the common national mind and manners. And Sterne also, in his more aërial way, deals rather with the oddities and quaintnesses of opinion and habit that are to be met with among his countrymen than with the broad general course of our English way

of thinking and living. Our first genuine novel of domestic life is Goldsmith's Vicar of Wakefield, written in 1761, when its author, born in Ireland in 1728, was as yet an obscure doer of all work for the booksellers, but not published till 1766, when his name had already obtained celebrity by his poem of The Traveller. Assuming the grace of confession, or the advantage of the first word, Goldsmith himself introduces his performance by observing, that there are a hundred faults in it; adding, that a hundred things might be said to prove them beauties. The case is not exactly as he puts it: the faults may have compensating beauties, but are incontrovertibly faults. Indeed, if we look only to what is more superficial or external in the work, to the construction and conduct of the story, and even to much of the exhibition of manners and character, its faults are unexampled and astounding. Never was there a story put together in such an inartificial, thoughtless, blundering way. It is little better than such a "concatenation accordingly" as satisfies one in a dream. It is not merely that everything is brought about by such sudden apparitions and transformations as only happen at the call of Harlequin's wand. Of this the author himself seems to be sensible, from a sort of defence which he sets up in one place: "Nor can I go on," he observes, after one of his sharp turns, "without a reflection on those accidental meetings which, though they happen every day, seldom excite our surprise but upon some extraordinary occasion. To what a fortuitous occurrence do we not owe every pleasure and convenience of our lives! How many seeming accidents must unite before we can be clothed or fed! The peasant must be disposed to labour, the shower must fall, the wind fill the merchant's sail, or numbers must want the usual supply." But, in addition to this, probability, or we might almost say possibility, is violated at every step with little more hesitation or compunction than in a fairy tale. Nothing happens, nobody acts, as things would happen, and as men and women would naturally act, in real life. Much of what goes on is entirely incredible and incomprehensible. Even the name of the book seems an absurdity. The Vicar leaves Wakefield in the beginning of the third chapter, and, it must be supposed, resigns his vicarage, of which we hear no more; yet the family is called the family of Wakefield throughout. This is of a piece with the famous bull that occurs in the ballad given in a subsequent chapter:—

The dew, the blossoms on the tree,
With charms *inconstant* shine;
Their charms were his, but, woe to me,
Their *constancy* was mine.

But why does the vicar, upon losing his fortune, give up his vicarage? Why, in his otherwise reduced circumstances, does he prefer a curacy of fifteen pounds to a vicarage of thirty-five? Are we expected to think this quite a matter of course (there is not a syllable of explanation), upon the same principle on which we are called upon to believe that he was overwhelmed with surprise at finding his old friend Wilmot not to be a monogamist? —the said friend being at that time actually courting a fourth wife. And it is all in the same strain. The whole story of the two Thornhills, the uncle and nephew, is a heap of contradictions and absurdities. Sir William Thornhill is universally known; and yet in his assumed character of Burchell, without even, as far as appears, any disguise of his person, he passes undetected in a familiar intercourse of months with the tenantry of his own estate. If, indeed, we are not to understand something even beyond this—that, while all the neighbours know him to be Sir William, the Primroses alone never learn that fact, and still continue to take him for Mr. Burchell. But what, after all, is Burchell's real history? Nothing that is afterwards stated confirms or explains the intimation he is made unintentionally to let fall in one of the commencing chapters, about his early life. How, by-the-by, does the vicar come to know, a few chapters afterwards, that Burchell has really been telling his own story in the account he had given of Sir William Thornhill? Compare chapters third and sixth. But, take any view we will, the uncle's treatment of his nephew remains unaccounted for. Still more unintelligible is his conduct in his self-adopted capacity of lover of one of the vicar's daughters, and guardian of the virtue and safety of both. The plainest, easiest way of saving them from all harm and all danger stares him in the face, and for no reason that can be imagined he leaves them to their fate. As for his accidental rescue of Sophia afterwards, the whole affair is only to be matched for wildness and extravagance in Jack the Giant-killer or some other of that class of books. It is beyond even the Doctor of Divinity appearing at the fair with his horse to sell, and in the usual forms putting him through all his paces. But it is impossible to enumerate all the improbabilities with

which the story is filled. Every scene, without any exception, in which the squire appears involves something out of nature or which passes understanding;—his position in reference to his uncle in the first place, the whole of his intercourse with the clergyman's family, his dining with them attended by his two women and his troop of servants in their one room, at other times his association there with young farmer Williams (suddenly provided by the author when wanted as a suitor for Olivia), the unblushing manner in which he makes his infamous proposals, the still more extraordinary indulgence with which they are forgiven and forgotten, or rather forgotten without his ever having asked or dreamt of asking forgiveness, all his audacious ruffianism in his attempts to possess himself of the two sisters at once, and finally, and above all, his defence of himself to his uncle at their meeting in the prison, which surely outrants anything ever before attempted in decent prose or rhyme. Nor must that superlative pair of lovers, the vicar's eldest son George and Miss Arabella Wilmot, be overlooked, with the singularly cool and easy way in which they pass from the most violent affection to the most entire indifference, and on the lady's part even transference of hand and heart to another, and back again as suddenly to mutual transport and confidence. If Goldsmith intended George for a representation of himself (as their adventures are believed to have been in some respects the same), we should be sorry to think the likeness a good one; for he is the most disagreeable character in the book. His very existence seems to have been entirely forgotten by his family, and by the author, for the first three years after he left home; and the story would have been all the better if he had never chanced to turn up again, or to be thought of, at all. Was ever such a letter read as the one he is made in duty and affection to write to his father in the twenty-eighth chapter! Yet there is that in the book which makes all this comparatively of little consequence; the inspiration and vital power of original genius, the charm of true feeling, some portion of the music of the great hymn of nature made audible to all hearts. Notwithstanding all its improbabilities, the story not only amuses us while we read, but takes root in the memory and affections as much almost as any story that was ever written. In truth, the critical objections to which it is obnoxious hardly affect its real merits and the proper sources of its interest. All of it that is essential lies in the development of the characters of the good vicar and his family,

and they are one and all admirably brought out. He himself, simple and credulous, but also learned and clear-headed, so guileless and affectionate, sustaining so well all fortunes, so great both in suffering and in action, altogether so unselfish and noble-minded; his wife, of a much coarser grain, with her gooseberry-wine, and her little female vanities and schemes of ambition, but also made respectable by her love and reverence for her husband, her pride in, if not affection for, her children, her talent of management and housewifery, and the fortitude and resignation with which she too bears her part in their common calamities; the two girls, so unlike and yet so sister-like; the inimitable Moses, with his black ribbon, and his invincibility in argument and bargain-making; nor to be omitted the chubby-cheeked rogue little Bill, and the "honest veteran" Dick; the homely happiness of that fireside, upon which worldly misfortune can cast hardly a passing shadow; their little concerts, their dances; neighbour Flamborough's two rosy daughters, with their red top-knots; Moses's speculation in the green spectacles, and the vicar's own subsequent adventure (though running somewhat into the extravaganza style) with the same venerable arch-rogue, "with grey hair, and no flaps to his pocket-holes;" the immortal family picture; and, like a sudden thunderbolt falling in the sunshine, the flight of poor passion-driven Olivia, her few distracted words as she stept into the chaise, "O! what will my poor papa do when he knows I am undone!" and the heart-shivered old man's cry of anguish—"Now, then, my children, go and be miserable; for we shall never enjoy one hour more;" —these, and other incidents and touches of the same kind, are the parts of the book that are remembered; all the rest drops off, as so much mere husk, or other extraneous enwrapment, after we have read it; and out of these we reconstruct the story, if we will have one, for ourselves, or, what is better, rest satisfied with the good we have got, and do not mind though so much truth and beauty will not take the shape of a story, which is after all the source of pleasure even in a work of fiction which is of the lowest importance, for it scarcely lasts after the first reading. Part of the charm of this novel of Goldsmith's too consists in the art of writing which he has displayed in it. The style, always easy, transparent, harmonious, and expressive, teems with felicities in the more heightened passages. And, finally, the humour of the book is all good-humour. There is scarcely a touch of ill-nature or even of satire in it from beginning to end—

nothing of either acrimony or acid. Johnson has well characterized Goldsmith in his epitaph as *sive risus essent movendi sive lacrymæ, affectuum potens at lenis dominator*—a ruler of our affections, and mover alike of our laughter and our tears, as gentle as he is prevailing. With all his loveable qualities, he had also many weaknesses and pettinesses of personal character; but his writings are as free from any ingredient of malignity, either great or small, as those of any man. As the author, too, of the Traveller and the Deserted Village, published in 1765 and 1771, Goldsmith, who lived till 1774, holds a distinguished place among the poetical writers of the middle portion of the last century. He had not the skyey fancy of his predecessor Collins, but there is an earnestness and cordiality in his poetry which the school of Pope, to which, in its form at least, it belongs, had scarcely before reached, and which make it an appropriate prelude to the more fervid song that was to burst forth among us in another generation.

Churchill.

But perhaps the writer who, if not by what he did himself, yet by the effects of his example, gave the greatest impulse to our poetry at this time, was Churchill. Charles Churchill, born in 1731, published his first poem, The Rosciad, in 1761; and the rest of his pieces, his Apology to the Critical Reviewers—his epistle to his friend Lloyd, entitled Night—The Ghost, eventually extended to four Books—The Prophecy of Famine—his Epistle to Hogarth—The Conference—The Duellist—The Author—Gotham, in three Books—The Candidate—The Farewell—The Times—Independence—all within the next three years and a half. He was suddenly carried off by an attack of fever in November, 1764. If we put aside Thomson, Churchill, after all deductions, may be pronounced, looking to the quantity as well as the quality of his productions, to be the most considerable figure that appears in our poetry in the half-century from Pope to Cowper. But that is, perhaps, rather to say little for the said half-century than much for Churchill. All that he wrote being not only upon topics of the day, but addressed to the most sensitive or most excited passions of the mob of readers, he made an immense impression upon his contemporaries, which, how-

ever, is now worn very faint. Some looked upon him as Dryden come to life again, others as a greater than Dryden. As for Pope, he was generally thought to be quite outshone or eclipsed by the new satirist. Yet Churchill, in truth, with great rhetorical vigour and extraordinary fluency, is wholly destitute of either poetry or wit of any high order. He is only, at the most, a better sort of Cleveland, not certainly having more force or pungency than that old writer, but a freer flow and broader sweep in his satire. Of the true fervour and fusing power of Dryden he has nothing, any more than he has of what is best and most characteristic in Pope, to whose wit his stands in the relation or contrast of a wooden pin to a lancet. The most successful ten continuous lines he ever wrote in the same style are certainly not worth the ten worst of Pope's. But, indeed, he scarcely has anywhere ten lines, or two lines, without a blemish. In reading Pope, the constant feeling is that, of its kind, nothing could be better; in reading Churchill, we feel that nearly everything might be better, that, if the thought is good, the setting is defective, but generally that, whatever there may be of merit in either, there are flaws in both. Instead of there being nothing to be mended, everything might be mended. The ore, indeed, is hardly ever purified or properly extracted from the clay and gravel; in no other poetry is there such an intermixture of the prosaic. But much even of the poetry is nothing more than an echo—an unscrupulous appropriation and parroting—of the phrases of preceding writers, often of such as had become universally current and familiar. What best suited Churchill was, for the most part, whatever came readiest to hand. Yet there was a fine animal spirit about him; and, as we have said, his example probably contributed a good deal to give more freedom and cordiality to our poetry. But it was much as the adventurousness of a drunken man may sometimes inspire those who are sober. Cowper, who was at school with Churchill, and had a high admiration of his writings (some of which, however, that he praises most he can hardly be supposed to have looked into from the time of their first appearance), seems to have made him his model in some respects.*

* For a much higher estimate of Churchill's poetry than we have been able to form the reader may be referred to an article in the Edinburgh Review, No. clxiii., which is especially interesting for its eloquent and generous survey of the life of Churchill. See also Southey's Life of Cowper, vol. i. pp. 45—105.

FALCONER; BEATTIE; ANSTEY; J. H. STEVENSON; MASON.

To the present date belongs Falconer's pleasing descriptive poem, The Shipwreck, the truth, nature, and pathos of which, without much imaginative adornment, have made it a general favourite. It was first published in 1762, and its author, who was a native of Scotland, was lost at sea in 1769, in his thirty-ninth year. Another poem of this age, by a countryman of Falconer's, is Beattie's Minstrel, the first book of which was published in 1770, the second in 1774. The Minstrel is an harmonious and eloquent composition, glowing with poetical sentiment; but its inferiority in the highest poetical qualities may be felt by comparing it with Thomson's Castle of Indolence, which is perhaps the other work in the language which it most nearly resembles, but which yet it resembles much in the same way as gilding does solid gold, or as coloured water might be made to resemble wine. Everybody knows that, besides this and other pieces in verse, Beattie, who survived till 1803, wrote an Essay on Truth, and some other prose works, which everybody has long given up reading. The New Bath Guide, by Anstey, who lived till 1805, and wrote a considerable quantity of more verse, may be noticed as another of the poetical productions of this time which for a season enjoyed great popularity, though now neglected. It first appeared in 1766, and the edition before us, printed in 1772, is the eighth. The New Bath Guide does not rise or aspire to rise above a rattling vivacity, and has been far surpassed in brilliancy by later productions in the same style; but it is entitled to be remembered as the earliest successful attempt of its class. Among the lighter versifiers of this time may be mentioned John Hall Stevenson, the author of the Crazy Tales, and other collections of satiric pieces, which are impregnated by a much airier spirit of wit and humour than those of Anstey. We may here also notice the celebrated Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers, which, with several other effusions in the same vein, appeared in 1773, and is now known to have been, what it was always suspected to be, the composition of Gray's friend, Mason, who commenced poet so early as 1748 by the publication of a satire on the University of Oxford, entitled Isis, and afterwards produced his tragedies of Elfrida in 1752 and Caractacus in 1759, and the four Books of his English Garden in 1772, 1777, 1779,

and 1781, besides a number of odes and other shorter pieces, some of them not till towards the close of the century. Mason, who died, at the age of seventy-two, in 1797, enjoyed in his day a great reputation, which is now become very small. His satiric verse is in the manner of Pope, but without the wit; and the staple of the rest of his poetry too is mostly words.

The Wartons; Percy; Chatterton; Macpherson.

There is much more of fancy and true poetry, though less sound and less pretension, in the compositions of Thomas Warton, who first made himself known by a spirited reply to Mason's Isis in 1749, when he was only a young man of twenty-one, and afterwards produced many short pieces, all evidencing a genuine poetic eye and taste. Thomas Warton, however, who lived till 1790, chiefly owes the place he holds in our literature to his prose works—his Observations on the Fairy Queen, his edition of the Minor Poems of Milton, and, above all, his admirable History of English Poetry, which, unfinished as it is, is still perhaps our greatest work in the department of literary history. Of the three quarto volumes the first appeared in 1774, the second in 1778, the last in 1781. Dr. Joseph Warton, the elder brother of Thomas, is also the writer of some agreeable verses; but the book by which his name will live is his Essay on the Genius and Writings of Pope, the first volume of which was published, anonymously, in 1756, the second not till 1782. He died in 1800, in his seventy-eighth year.

The Wartons may be regarded as the founders of a new school of poetic criticism in this country, which, romantic rather than classical in its spirit (to employ a modern nomenclature), and professing to go to nature for its principles instead of taking them on trust from the practice of the Greek and Roman poets, or the canons of their commentators, assisted materially in guiding as well as strengthening the now reviving love for our older national poetry. But perhaps the publication which was as yet at once the most remarkable product of this new taste, and the most effective agent in its diffusion, was Percy's celebrated Reliques of Ancient English Poetry, which first appeared in 1765. The reception of this book was the same that what is natural and

true always meets with when brought into fair competition with the artificial; that is to say, when the latter is no longer new any more than the former:—

> "As one who, long in populous city pent,
> Forth issuing on a summer's morn to breathe
> Among the pleasant villages and farms
> Adjoined, from each thing met conceives delight,
> The smell of grain, or tedded grass, or kine,
> Or dairy, each rural sight, each rural sound;"

such pleasure took the reader of those rude old ballads in their simplicity, directness, and breezy freshness and force, thus suddenly coming upon him after being sated with mere polish and ornament. And connected with the same matter is the famous imposture of Rowley's poems, by which a boy of seventeen, the marvellous Chatterton, deceived in the first instance a large portion of the public, and, after the detection of the fraud, secured to himself a respectable place among the original poets of his country. Chatterton, who terminated his existence by his own hand in August, 1770, produced the several imitations of ancient English poetry which he attributed to Thomas Rowley, a monk of the fifteenth century, in that and the preceding year. But this was the age of remarkable forgeries of this description; Chatterton's poems of Rowley having been preceded, and perhaps in part suggested, by Macpherson's poems of Ossian. The first specimens of the latter were published in 1760, under the title of Fragments of Ancient Poetry, collected in the Highlands of Scotland, and translated from the Gaelic or Erse language; and they immediately excited both an interest and a controversy, neither the one nor the other of which has quite died away even to the present hour. One circumstance, which has contributed to keep up the dispute about Ossian so much longer than that about Rowley, no doubt, is, that there was some small portion of truth mixed up with Macpherson's deception, whereas there was none at all in Chatterton's; but the Ossianic poetry, after all that has been said about its falsehood of style and substance as well as of pretension, making it out to be thus a double lie, must still have some qualities wonderfully adapted to allure the popular taste. Both Chatterton and Macpherson wrote a quantity of modern English verse in their own names; but nothing either did in this way was worth much: they evidently felt most at ease in their masks.

Dramatic Writers.

The dramatic literature of the earlier part of the reign of George III. is very voluminous, but consists principally of comedies and farces of modern life, all in prose. Home, indeed, the author of Douglas, which came out in 1757, followed that first successful effort by about half a dozen other attempts in the same style, the last of which, entitled Alfred, was produced in 1778; but they were all failures. Horace Walpole's great tragedy, the Mysterious Mother, although privately printed in 1768, was never acted, and was not even published till many years after. The principal writers whose productions occupied the stage were Goldsmith, Garrick, and Foote, who all died in the earlier part of the reign of George III.; and Macklin, Murphy, Cumberland, Colman, Mrs. Cowley, and Sheridan, who mostly survived till after the commencement of the present century. Goldsmith's two capital comedies of the Good-Natured Man, and She Stoops to Conquer, were brought out, the former in 1768, the latter in 1773. To Garrick, a miracle of an actor, but no more than a smartish man of talent off the boards, we owe, besides many alterations and adaptations of the works of Shakespeare and other preceding dramatic writers, the lively farces of The Lying Valet and Miss in her Teens, both, however, produced before 1760; and he is also commonly stated to have been in part the author of the excellent comedy of The Clandestine Marriage, brought out in 1766, which was principally written by Colman.* The still favourite farce of High Life Below Stairs, first acted in 1759, which used also to be attributed to Garrick, is now understood to have been written by the Rev. James Townley, assisted by Dr. Hoadly, the author of The Suspicious Husband. Foote produced twenty-two comic pieces, mostly farcical and satirical, between 1752 and 1778; of which The Minor (1760), The Liar (1761), and The Mayor of Garratt (1763), still keep the stage. He was by nature a mimic, and a somewhat coarse one, rather

* In a copy of Baker's Biographia Dramatica, edit. of 1782, we find the following MS. note appended to the notice of this play, at p. 57 of vol. ii. :— 'Garrick composed two acts, which he sent Mr. Colman, desiring him to put them together, or do what he would with them. *I did put them together*, said Mr. Colman; *for I put them in the fire, and wrote the play myself.* I had this anecdote from Mr. Colman's mouth. J. W."

than a wit.* Macklin, also an actor as well as Garrick and Foote, is the author of the very clever and effective comedy of The Man of the World, which was brought out in Ireland, his native country, in 1764, under the name of The Free-Born Scotchman, although the daring delineation of the principal character, the renowned Sir Pertinax Macsycophant, debarred it for many years from the English stage. Macklin, who did not die till 1797, is remarkable for having lived till the age of a hundred and seven, and for, what is still more unexampled, having continued his appearances on the stage almost till he was a hundred. Colman, an accomplished scholar, and well known for his translations of the Plays of Terence and Horace's Art of Poetry, and for various other literary performances, commenced dramatist in 1760, by the production of a clever and successful little piece, which he entitled Polly Honeycombe, a Dramatic Novel; and between twenty and thirty more comedies, farces, and alterations of older plays proceeded from his pen before 1780, among which his comedy of The Jealous Wife, produced in 1761, ranks as the best along with that of The Clandestine Marriage, already mentioned. Colman lived till 1794. Murphy, also an elegant scholar, and the translator of Tacitus and Sallust, is the author, among other dramatic productions of less note, of the farce of The Upholsterer (1758), of the comedies of The Way to Keep Him (1760), All in the Wrong (1761), Know your Own Mind (1777), and of the tragedy of The Grecian Daughter (1772). Murphy died in 1805, in his eighty-fifth year. Cumberland, a voluminous poet, or versifier, novelist, pamphleteer, essayist, critic, &c. &c., as well as a dramatist, began to write for the stage so early as 1761, and, amid much of what he did that is forgotten, will continue to be remembered for his striking comedies of The West Indian, The Fashionable Lover, The Jew, and The Wheel of Fortune. This somewhat overweening and superficial but still ingenious and not unamiable man died in 1811, at the age of seventy-nine. Mrs. Cowley's pleasant comedy of The Belle's Stratagem was brought out with great success in 1780: this lady, whose first play, The Runaway, appeared in 1776, wrote also a number of long poems, now all forgotten, and survived till 1809. But the most brilliant contributions made to

* See, however, a much higher estimate of Foote in an article, equally lively and learned, in the Quarterly Review, No. 490, for Sept. 1854.

our dramatic literature in this age were Sheridan's celebrated comedies of The Rivals, brought out in 1775, when the author was only in his twenty-fifth year, The Duenna, which followed the same year, and The School for Scandal, which crowned the reputation of the modern Congreve, in 1777. After all that had been written, indeed, meritoriously enough in many instances, by his contemporaries and immediate predecessors, these plays of Sheridan's were the only additions that had yet been made to the classic comedy of Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar; and perhaps we may say that they are still the last it has received. Sheridan's wit is as polished as Congreve's, and its flashes, if not quite so quick and dazzling, have a softer, a more liquid light; he may be said to stand between the highly artificial point and concentration of Congreve and the Irish ease and gaiety of Farquhar, wanting, doubtless, what is most characteristic of either, but also combining something of each. Sheridan had likewise produced all his other dramatic pieces—The Trip to Scarborough, The Critic, &c.—before 1780; although he lived for thirty-six years after that date.

Female Writers.

The direction of so large a portion of the writing talent of this age to the comic drama is an evidence of the extended diffusion of literary tastes and accomplishments among the class most conversant with those manners and forms of social life which chiefly supply the materials of modern comedy. To this period has been sometimes assigned the commencement of the pursuit of literature as a distinct profession in England; now, too, we may say, began its domestic cultivation among us—the practice of writing for the public as the occupation and embellishment of a part of that leisure which necessarily abounds in an advanced state of society, not only among persons possessing the means of living without exertion of any kind, but almost throughout the various grades of those who are merely raised above the necessity of labouring with their hands. Another indication of the same thing is the great increase that now took place in the number of female authors. Among the writers of plays, novels, and poetry, besides Mrs. Cowley, mentioned above, may be noticed Mrs. Sheridan

(originally Miss Frances Chamberlayne),—the admirable mother of Richard Brinsley Sheridan, for whose sake Samuel Johnson was contented to keep on terms, so long as she lived, with the vain, gasconading, mercurial projector and adventurer, her husband,—the authoress of the two comedies of The Discovery, brought out with great success in 1763, and The Dupe, which was produced in 1765, and which, although it failed on the stage, owing, it is said, to a conspiracy of some hostile parties, was also well received by the public from the press, and of the novels of Sidney Bidulph and Nourjahad, all written in the darkest hours of a life of struggle and disappointment, which a complication of diseases terminated in 1766, at the age of forty-two; Mrs. Brooke (whose maiden name was Miss Frances Moore), the authoress of the novels of Lady Juliet Mandeville and Emily Montague, and of the musical drama of Rosina, as well as of some tragedies and other compositions in prose and verse—among the rest, a periodical work called The Old Maid, which appeared weekly from November, 1755, to July, 1756; Miss Jane Marshall, an Edinburgh lady, of whom there remain the novels of Clarinda Cathcart and Alicia Montague, which had considerable success on their first appearance, in 1765 and 1767, and the comedy of Sir Harry Gaylove, printed in 1772, although never acted, but whose most interesting production is a Series of Letters, in two volumes, Edinburgh, 1788, in which she gives a *naïve* and lively account of the mischances of her literary career; Mrs. Lennox (originally Miss Charlotte Ramsay, a native of New York), whose Memoirs of Harriet Stuart appeared in 1751, her Female Quixote, or Adventures of Arabella, to which Johnson wrote the dedication, in 1752, her Shakespeare Illustrated in 1753, her novel of Sophia in 1761, her comedy of The Sister in 1769, and who did not cease to write till near the end of the century; Miss Sophia Lee, whose two first performances, her amusing comedy of The Chapter of Accidents, and her popular romance of The Recess, were produced, the former in 1780, the latter in 1783; and Miss Frances Burney, afterwards Madame D'Arblay, whose two first novels of Evelina and Cecilia appeared, the former in 1777, the latter in 1782.* To these names may be

* Along with, perhaps, a higher appreciation of the literary merits of Miss Burney's two early novels than has been expressed by any recent critic, Lord Macaulay has, in an article published in the Edinburgh Review for January, 1843, claimed for her the honour of being the true founder of the modern

added, as distinguished in other kinds of writing, blind Anna Williams, Dr. Johnson's friend, whose volume of Miscellanies in prose and verse was published in 1766; the learned Miss Elizabeth Carter, whose translation of Epictetus, however, and we believe all her other works, had appeared before the commencement of the reign of George III., although she lived till the year 1806; her friend Miss Catherine Talbot, the writer of a considerable quantity both of prose and verse, now forgotten; Mrs. Montagu (originally Miss Elizabeth Robinson), the pupil of Dr. Conyers Middleton, and the founder of the Blue Stocking Club, whose once famous Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespeare was published in 1769, and who survived till the year 1800; Mrs. Chapone (Miss Hester Mulso), another friend of Miss Carter, and the favourite correspondent of Samuel Richardson, whose Letters on the Improvement of the Mind appeared in 1773; Mrs. Macaulay (originally Miss Catherine Sawbridge, finally Mrs. Graham), the notorious republican historian and pamphleteer, whose History of England from the Accession of James I. to the Restoration was published in a succession of volumes between the years 1763 and 1771, and then excited much attention, though now neglected; and the other female democratic writer, Miss Helen Maria Williams, who did not, however, begin to figure as a politician till after the French Re-

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school of female novel writers. "Her appearance," he observes, "is an important epoch in our literary history. Evelina was the first tale written by a woman, and purporting to be a picture of life and manners, that lived, or deserved to live. . . . . Miss Burney did for the English novel what Jeremy Collier did for the English Drama; and she did it in a better way. She first showed that a tale might be written in which both the fashionable and the vulgar life of London might be exhibited with great force, and with broad comic humour, and which yet should not contain a single line inconsistent with rigid morality, or even with virgin delicacy. She took away the reproach which lay on a most useful and delightful species of composition. She vindicated the right of her sex to an equal share in a fair and noble province of letters. Several accomplished women have followed in her track. At present the novels which we owe to English ladies form no small part of the literary glory of our country. No class of works is more honourably distinguished by fine observation, by grace, by delicate wit, by pure moral feeling. Several among the successors of Madame D'Arblay have equalled her; two, we think, have surpassed her. But the fact that she has been surpassed gives her an additional claim to our respect and gratitude; for, in truth, we owe to her not only Evelina, Cecilia, and Camilla [published in 1796], but also Mansfield Park [Miss Austen] and The Absentee [Miss Edgeworth]."

volution, her only publications that fall to be noticed in this place being some volumes of verse which she gave to the world in 1782 and the two or three following years. Mrs. Hannah More, Mrs. Barbauld, Mrs. Charlotte Smith, Mrs. Inchbald, and some other female writers who did not obtain the height of their reputation till a later date, had also entered upon the career of authorship within the first quarter of a century of the reign of George III. And to the commencement of that reign is to be assigned perhaps the most brilliant contribution from a female pen that had yet been added to our literature, the collection of the Letters of Lady Mary Wortley Montagu, which, although written many years before, were first published in 1763, about a year after Lady Mary's death. The fourth volume, indeed, did not appear till 1767.

Periodical Essayists.

To the latter part of the reign of George II. belongs the revival of the Periodical Essay, which formed so distinguishing a feature of our literature in the age of Anne. Political writing, indeed, in this form had been carried on from the era of the Examiner, and the Englishman, and the Freeholder, and Defoe's Review and Mercator, and the British Merchant, with little, if any intermission, in various publications; the most remarkable being The Craftsman, in which Bolingbroke was the principal writer, and the papers of which, as first collected and reprinted in seven volumes, extend from the 5th of December, 1726, to the 22nd of May, 1731; nor was the work dropped till it had gone on for some years longer. Some attempts had even been made during this interval to supply the place of the Tatler, Spectator, and Guardian, by periodical papers, ranging, in the same strain, over the general field of morals and manners: Ambrose Philips, for instance, and a number of his friends, in the year 1718 began the publication of a paper entitled "The Free-thinker, or Essays on Ignorance, Superstition, Bigotry, Enthusiasm, Craft, &c., intermixed with several pieces of wit and humour designed to restore the deluded part of mankind to the use of reason and common sense," which attracted considerable attention at the time, and was kept up till the numbers made a book of three volumes,

which were more than once reprinted. The Museum was another similar work, which commenced in 1746, and also ran to three volumes—Horace Walpole, Akenside, the two Wartons, and other eminent writers being among the contributors; but nothing of this kind that was then produced has succeeded in securing for itself a permanent place in our literature. The next of our periodical works after The Guardian that is recognized as one of the classics of the language is The Rambler, the first number of which appeared on Tuesday, the 20th of March, 1750, the last (the 208th) on Saturday, the 14th of March, 1752, and all the papers of which, at the rate of two a week, with the exception only of three or four, were the composition of Samuel Johnson, who may be said to have first become generally known as a writer through this publication. The Rambler was succeeded by The Adventurer, edited and principally written by Dr. Hawkesworth, which was also published twice a week, the first number having appeared on Tuesday, the 7th of November, 1752, the last (the 139th) on Saturday, the 9th of March, 1754. Meanwhile The World, a weekly paper, had been started under the conduct of Edward Moore, the author of the Fables for the Female Sex, the tragedy of The Gamester and other dramatic productions, assisted by Lord Lyttelton, the Earls of Chesterfield, Bath, and Cork, Horace Walpole, Soame Jenyns, and other contributors: the first number appeared on Thursday, the 4th of January, 1753; the 209th, and last, on the 30th of December, 1756. And contemporary with The World, during a part of this space, was The Connoisseur, established and principally written by George Colman, in conjunction with Bonnell Thornton, a writer possessed of considerable wit and humour, which, however, he dissipated for the most part upon ephemeral topics, being only now remembered for his share in a translation of Plautus, also undertaken in concert with his friend Colman, the first two of the five volumes of which were published in 1766, two years before his death, at the age of forty-four. The Connoisseur was, like The World, a weekly publication, and it was continued in 140 numbers, from Thursday, the 31st of January, 1754, to the 30th of September, 1756. We have already mentioned Mrs. Frances Brooke's weekly periodical work entitled The Old Maid, which subsisted from November, 1755, to July in the following year; but it is not usually admitted into the collections of the English essayists. The next publication of this class

which can be said still to hold a place in our literature is Johnson's Idler, which appeared once a week from Saturday, the 15th of April, 1758, to Saturday, the 5th of April, 1760. And with The Idler closes what may be called the second age of the English periodical essayists, which commences with The Rambler, and extends over the ten years from 1750 to 1760, the concluding decade of the reign of George II. After this occurs another long interval, in which that mode of writing was dropped, or at least no longer attracted either the favour of the public or the ambition of the more distinguished literary talent of the day; for no doubt attempts still continued to be made, with little or no success, by obscure scribblers, to keep up what had lately been so popular and so graced by eminent names: thus, Hugh Kelly, the author of The School for Wives, and some other second-rate dramas, produced during this interval a series of papers in a flashy, juvenile style under the title of The Babbler, which were afterwards collected in two small volumes; Miss Marshall, the Edinburgh novelist, who has been already mentioned, about the close of the year 1770 set up a periodical paper in London, in which, she tells us, she had the assistance of several gentlemen of known literary merit, although the sale proved insufficient to enable her to go on with it;* and there were of course many more such

* Letters, vol. ii. pp. 202, 229. The very title of this forgotten work is probably now irrecoverable, as well as the names of the meritorious literati who were to lend it the aid of their reputation and abilities. Its ingenious, sensible, and good-humoured projector says, "From a grateful sense of the Duchess of Northumberland's goodness [her first novel had been presented to the queen by the duchess], I sent her grace the introductory paper in manuscript, begging the favour of being allowed the honour of dedicating the work to her grace; and next day I was waited on by a gentleman, probably one of her suite, who informed me that her grace not only accepted the dedication, and would most cheerfully patronize the work, but would also furnish me with some anecdotes which might be useful in the publication. But whether this gentleman, displeased with my *je ne scais quoi*, or disgusted at my Scots accent, had prejudiced her grace against me; or whether my not waiting on the duchess to receive the anecdotes, I cannot say; but I never had the good fortune to hear from my patroness again." In reply to an application she made to Lord Lyttelton for his advice as to whether she should continue the publication, his lordship wrote—"On considering the question you do me the honour to put to me, my answer is this: if you write for fame, go on; if for money, desist, unless the Duchess of Northumberland or Lord Chesterfield will enable you to bear the expense of continuing the paper till it becomes so well known as to support itself. This they surely could do without any inconvenience to their opulent fortunes; and this I would do, if I were in their circumstances, with great pleasure."

instances. But we have no series of periodical papers of this time, of the same character with those already mentioned, that is still reprinted and read. Goldsmith's Citizen of the World, occupied as it is with the adventures and observations of an individual, placed in very peculiar circumstances, partakes more of the character of a novel than of a succession of miscellaneous papers; and both the letters composing that work and the other delightful essays of the same writer were published occasionally, not periodically or at regular intervals, and only as contributions to the newspapers or other journals of the day,—not by themselves, like the numbers of the Spectator, the Rambler, and the other works of that description that have been mentioned. Our next series of periodical essays, properly so called, was that which began to be published at Edinburgh, under the name of The Mirror, on Saturday, the 23rd of January, 1779, and was continued at the rate of a number a week till the 27th of May, 1780. The conductor and principal writer of The Mirror was the late Henry Mackenzie, who died in Edinburgh, at the age of eighty-six, in 1831, the author of The Man of Feeling, published anonymously in 1771, The Man of the World, 1773, and Julia de Roubigné, 1777, novels after the manner of Sterne, which are still universally read, and which have much of the grace and delicacy of style as well as of the pathos of that great master, although without any of his rich and peculiar humour. The Mirror was succeeded, after an interval of a few years, by The Lounger, also a weekly paper, the first number of which appeared on Saturday, the 5th of February, 1785, Mackenzie being again the leading contributor; the last (the 101st) on the 6th of January, 1787. But with these two publications the spirit of periodical essay-writing, in the style first made famous by Steele and Addison, expired also in Scotland, as it had already done a quarter of a century before in England.

Political Writing.—Wilkes; Junius.

A hotter excitement, in truth, had dulled the public taste to the charms of those ethical and critical disquisitions, whether grave or gay, which it had heretofore found sufficiently stimulating; the violent war of parties, which, after a lull of nearly

twenty years, was resumed on the accession of George III., made political controversy the only kind of writing that would now go down with the generality of readers; and first Wilkes's famous North Briton, and then the yet more famous Letters of Junius, came to take the place of the Ramblers and Idlers, the Adventurers and Connoisseurs. The North Briton, the first number of which appeared on Saturday, the 5th of June, 1762, was started in opposition to The Briton, a paper set up by Smollett in defence of the government on the preceding Saturday, the 29th of May, the day on which Lord Bute had been nominated first lord of the Treasury. Smollett and Wilkes had been friends up to this time; but the opposing papers were conducted in a spirit of the bitterest hostility, till the discontinuance of The Briton on the 12th of February, 1763, and the violent extinction of The North Briton on the 23rd of April following, fifteen days after the resignation of Bute, with the publication of its memorable "No. Forty-five." The celebrity of this one paper has preserved the memory of the North Briton to our day, in the same manner as in its own it produced several reimpressions of the whole work, which otherwise would probably have been as speedily and completely forgotten as the rival publication, and as the Auditors and Monitors, and other organs of the two factions, that in the same contention helped to fill the air with their din for a season, and then were heard of no more than any other quieted noise. Wilkes's brilliancy faded away when he proceeded to commit his thoughts to paper, as if it had dissolved itself in the ink. Like all convivial wits, or shining talkers, he was of course indebted for much of the effect he produced in society to the promptitude and skill with which he seized the proper moment for saying his good things, to the surprise produced by the suddenness of the flash, and to the characteristic peculiarities of voice, action, and manner with which the jest or repartee was set off, and which usually serve as signals or stimulants to awaken the sense of the ludicrous before its expected gratification comes; in writing, little or nothing of all this could be brought into play; but still some of Wilkes's colloquial impromptus that have been preserved are so perfect, considered in themselves, and without regard to the readiness with which they may have been struck out,—are so true and deep, and evince so keen a feeling at once of the ridiculous and of the real,—that one wonders at finding so little of the same kind of power in his more deliberate efforts.

In all his published writings that we have looked into—and, what with essays, and pamphlets of one kind and another, they fill a good many volumes—we scarcely recollect anything that either in matter or manner rises above the veriest commonplace, unless perhaps it be a character of Lord Chatham, occurring in a letter addressed to the Duke of Grafton, some of the biting things in which are impregnated with rather a subtle venom. A few of his verses also have some fancy and elegance, in the style of Carew and Waller. But even his private letters, of which two collections have been published, scarcely ever emit a sparkle. And his House of Commons speeches, which he wrote beforehand and got by heart, are equally unenlivened. It is evident, indeed, that he had not intellectual lung enough for any protracted exertion or display. The soil of his mind was a hungry, unproductive gravel, with some gems imbedded in it. The author of the Letters of Junius made his *début* about four years after the expiration of The North Briton, what is believed to be his first communication having appeared in the Public Advertiser on the 28th of April, 1767; but the letters, sixty-nine in number, signed Junius, and forming the collection with which every reader is familiar, extend only over the space from the 21st of January, 1769, to the 2nd of November, 1771.* Thus it appears that this celebrated writer had been nearly two years before the public before he attracted any considerable attention; a proof that the polish of his style was not really the thing that did most to bring him into notoriety; for, although we may admit that the composition of the letters signed Junius is more elaborate and sustained than that of the generality of his contributions to the same newspaper under the name of Brutus, Lucius, Atticus, and Mnemon, yet the difference is by no means so great as to be alone sufficient to account for the prodigious sensation at once excited by the former, after the slight regard with which the latter had been received for so long a time. What, in the first instance at least, more than his rhetoric, made the unknown Junius the object of universal interest, and of very general terror, was undoubtedly the quantity of secret intelligence he showed himself to be possessed of, combined with the unscru-

* The 69th Letter, addressed to Lord Camden, is without a date; and there are other private letters, of undisputed authenticity, to Woodfall, the printer of the Public Advertiser, the last two of which are dated 10th May, 1772, and 19th January, 1773.

pulous boldness with which he was evidently prepared to use it. As has been observed, "ministers found, in these letters, proofs of some enemy, some spy, being amongst them."* It was im-

* See an ingenious and striking article by Mr. De Quincy, originally published in Tait's Edinburgh Magazine for December, 1840. Mr. De Quincy, proceeding upon the consideration noticed in the text, places in a new and strong light the identification of Junius with the late Sir Philip Francis, first suggested by Mr. John Taylor in his volume published in 1816, and long very generally thought to be as nearly established as anything ever was by merely circumstantial evidence. People were, indeed, to be met with who doubted or disbelieved; but they might be classed, for the most part, with those crotchety old ladies and gentlemen who, long after the case was clear enough to all persons of any sense or insight, used to go about arguing for the claims of sundry captains, clergymen, and women to the authorship of the Waverley novels, till Scott's own confession silenced them—if, indeed, they were all put down even by that. They were mostly persons capable of attending to only one consideration at a time—such as that Mr. Burke was skilled in imitating the styles of other writers and disguising his own—that Lord George Germaine was a man of a bad, or at least of a warm, temper—that William Gerard Hamilton evinced in his single speech a faculty of eloquence which, if he was not the author of the Letters of Junius, nobody can imagine what he did with for many years afterwards; as if fifty such insulated facts or fancies as these could outweigh the long unbroken chain of evidence extending over the whole history of Sir Philip Francis, and corroborated, we might almost say, in every way, excepting only by his own confession, in which it was possible that it should be corroborated—by many peculiarities of expression common to the letters and the acknowledged writings of their suspected author, by strong general similarity of style, by apparent identity of handwriting, nor least of all by the silence of Francis to his dying day (broken only by a solitary, faint equivocation, still more expressive than silence) under an ascription which, whether he might have regarded it as an imputation or as an honour, it is difficult to believe that a man of his temper would have submitted to thus tranquilly if it had not been true. If the humiliation and baseness of such an acquiescence would not have revolted the self-love and pride of a man like Sir Philip Francis, at any rate he was not a fool, and the mere risk of detection and deplumation, which might have happened any day, would have prevented him from enduring his false feathers. It was a case for an affidavit in a court of justice, if nothing less strenuous would serve the purpose; but there were many other ways by which, if he could not effectually put down the suspicion, he might at any rate have completely relieved himself from the charge of countenancing or encouraging it. We may remark, that the identification of the handwriting of Junius and Sir Philip Francis has been considerably strengthened by some comparative specimens published along with the Correspondence of Lord Chatham, 4 vols. 8vo. Lond. 1839.

Much, nevertheless, has also appeared within the last few years, which would throw doubts on the *Franciscan* theory. Especial reference may be made to the republication, in 1841, with a Preface, by Mr. N. W. Simons, of the British Museum, of a Letter to an Honourable Brigadier-General (the Hon. George Townshend, afterward the first Marquess Townshend), originally

mediately perceived in the highest circle of political society that the writer was either actually one of the members of the government, or a person who by some means or other had found access to the secrets of the government. And this suspicion, generally diffused, would add tenfold interest to the mystery of the authorship of the letters, even where the feeling which it had excited was one of mere curiosity, as it would be, of course, with the mass of the public. But, although it was not his style alone, or even chiefly, that made Junius famous, it is probably that, more than anything else, which has preserved his fame to our day. More even than the secret, so long in being penetrated, of his real name: that might have given occasion to abundance of conjecture and speculation, like the problem of the Iron Mask and other similar enigmas; but it would not have prompted the reproduction of the letters in innumerable editions, and made them, what they long were, one of the most popular and generally read books in the language, retaining their hold upon the public mind to a degree which perhaps never was equalled by any other literary production having so special a reference, in the greater

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published in 1760, when Francis was only nineteen, between the style of which and that of Junius Mr. Simons points out many remarkable resemblances—the late Mr. John Britton's curious volume, entitled the Authorship of the Letters of Junius Elucidated, 1848, in which Colonel Barré is maintained to be both Junius and the writer of the Letter to Townshend—the statement by Sir David Brewster, in the North British Review, No. 19, for November 1848, of the claims of Colonel Lachlan Macleane, together with a subsequent article, apparently by the same writer, in No. 38, for August, 1853—the elaborate argument of Mr. W. J. Smith in support of the claims of Earl Temple in the third volume of the Grenville Papers, 1852—and an important series of papers published in the Athenæum in 1853. On the other hand, very recently a fresh vein of investigation has been opened, which seems to hold out a promise, if pursued, of the positive conviction of Francis. See a paper in the third number of the Cornhill Magazine, for March, 1860. When this new evidence was explained to Lord Macaulay, a very short time before his death, he at once saw all its importance (provided only further research should establish what was as yet only highly probable), and he remarked to his informant, "Depend on it, you have caught Junius in the fact." Even the North British Reviewer of 1853, although he had set out (p. 482) with describing the claims of Francis as having been based principally on certain habits of expression found in his writings and also in those of Junius, concludes his elaborate investigation by admitting (p. 517) that, of all the persons to whom the authorship has been attributed, "Sir Philip Francis and Colonel Lachlan Macleane have the highest claims." After all, it is quite possible that the true Junius has never yet been named.

part of it, to topics of a temporary nature. The history of literature attests, as has been well remarked, that power of expression is a surer preservative of a writer's popularity than even strength of thought itself; that a book in which the former exists in a remarkable degree is almost sure to live, even if it should have very little else to recommend it. The style of Junius is wanting in some of the more exquisite qualities of eloquent writing; it has few natural graces, little variety, no picturesqueness; but still it is a striking and peculiar style, combining the charm of high polish with great nerve and animation, clear and rapid, and at the same time sonorous,—masculine enough, and yet making a very imposing display of all the artifices of antithetical rhetoric. As for the spirit of these famous compositions, it is a remarkable attestation to the author's power of writing that they were long universally regarded as dictated by the very genius of English liberty, and as almost a sort of Bible, or heaven-inspired exposition, of popular principles and rights. They contain, no doubt, many sound maxims, tersely and vigorously expressed; but of profound or farsighted political philosophy, or even of ingenious disquisition having the semblance of philosophy, there is as little in the Letters of Junius as there is in the Diary of Dodington or of Pepys; and, as for the writer's principles, they seem to be as much the product of mere temper, and of his individual animosities and spites, as even of his partisan habits and passions. He defends the cause of liberty itself in the spirit of tyranny; there is no generosity, or even common fairness, in his mode of combating; the newest lie, or private scandal, of the day serves as well, and as frequently, as anything else to point his sarcasm, or to arm with its vivid lightning the thunder of declamatory invective that resounds through his pages. Indeed, much of the popularity long enjoyed by these letters, as well as of the impression they made when they first appeared, is probably to be attributed to the singular fact that they supply, besides what other matter they may contain, a tolerably abundant *chronique scandaleuse* of the time—that this great public writer, the eloquent expounder and vindicator of constitutional principles and popular rights, is at the same time the chief recorder and preserver, at least in decent language, of the amours of the Duke of Grafton and Lord Irnham, and of the most piquant passages in the lives of Miss Kennedy, Miss Davis, and Nancy Parsons.

JOHNSON.

The character of Junius was drawn, while the mysterious shadow was still occupying the public gaze with its handwriting upon the wall, by one of the most distinguished of his contemporaries, in a publication which made a considerable noise at the time, but is now very much forgotten :—"Junius has sometimes made his satire felt; but let not injudicious admiration mistake the venom of the shaft for the vigour of the bow. He has sometimes sported with lucky malice; but to him that knows his company it is not hard to be sarcastic in a mask. While he walks, like Jack the Giant-killer, in a coat of darkness, he may do much mischief with little strength. . . . . Junius burst into notice with a blaze of impudence which has rarely glared upon the world before, and drew the rabble after him as a monster makes a show. When he had once provided for his safety by impenetrable secrecy, he had nothing to combat but truth and justice—enemies whom he knows to be feeble in the dark. Being then at liberty to indulge himself in all the immunities of invisibility; out of the reach of danger, he has been bold; out of the reach of shame, he has been confident. As a rhetorician, he has had the art of persuading when he seconded desire; as a reasoner, he has convinced those who had no doubt before; as a moralist, he has taught that virtue may disgrace; and, as a patriot, he has gratified the mean by insults on the high. Finding sedition ascendant, he has been able to advance it; finding the nation combustible, he has been able to inflame it. . . . . It is not by his liveliness of imagery, his pungency of periods, or his fertility of allusions that he detains the cits of London and the boors of Middlesex. Of style and sentiment they take no cognizance: they admire him for virtues like their own, for contempt of order and violence of outrage, for rage of defamation and audacity of falsehood. . . . . Junius is an unusual phenomenon, on which some have gazed with wonder, and some with terror; but wonder and terror are transitory passions. He will soon be more closely viewed, or more attentively examined; and what folly has taken for a comet, that from his flaming hair shook pestilence and war, inquiry will find to be only a meteor formed by the vapours of putrefying democracy, and kindled into flame by the effervescence of interest struggling with conviction;

which, after having plunged its followers into a bog, will leave us inquiring why we regard it." Thus wrote, in his ponderous but yet vigorous way, Samuel Johnson, in his pamphlet entitled Thoughts on the late Transactions respecting Falkland's Islands, published in 1771, in answer, as is commonly stated, to Junius's Forty-second Letter, dated the 30th of January in that year. Junius, although he continued to write for a twelvemonth longer, never took any notice of this attack; and Mrs. Piozzi tells us that Johnson "often delighted his imagination with the thoughts of having destroyed Junius." The lively lady, however, is scarcely the best authority on the subject of Johnson's *thoughts*, although we may yield a qualified faith to her reports of what he actually said and did. He may, probably enough, have thought, and said too, that he had beaten or silenced Junius, referring to the question discussed in his unanswered pamphlet; although, on the other hand, it does not appear that Junius was in the habit of ever noticing such general attacks as this: he replied to some of the writers who addressed him in the columns of the Public Advertiser, the newspaper in which his own communications were published, but he did not think it necessary to go forth to battle with any of the other pamphleteers by whom he was assailed, any more than with Johnson.

The great lexicographer winds up his character of Junius by remarking that he cannot think his style secure from criticism, and that his expressions are often trite, and his periods feeble. The style of Junius, nevertheless, was probably to a considerable extent formed upon Johnson's own. It had some strongly marked features of distinction, but yet it resembles the Johnsonian style much more than it does that of any other writer in the language antecedent to Johnson. Born in 1709, Johnson, after having while still resident in the country commenced his connexion with the press by some work in the way of translation and magazine writing, came to London along with his friend and pupil, the afterwards celebrated David Garrick, in March, 1737; and forthwith entered upon a career of authorship which extends over nearly half a century. His poem of London, an imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal, appeared in 1738; his Life of Savage, in a separate form, in 1744 (having been previously published in the Gentleman's Magazine); his poem entitled The Vanity of Human Wishes, an imitation of Juvenal's Tenth Satire, in 1749; his tragedy of Irene (written before he came up to

London) the same year; The Rambler, as already mentioned, between March, 1750, and March, 1752; his Dictionary of the English Language in 1755; The Idler between April, 1758, and April, 1760; his Rasselas in 1759; his edition of Shakespeare in 1765; his Journey to the Western Islands of Scotland in 1775; his Lives of the Poets in 1781; the intervals between these more remarkable efforts having given birth to many magazine articles, verses, and pamphlets, which cannot be here enumerated. His death took place on the 13th of December, 1784. All the works the titles of which have been given may be regarded as having taken and kept their places in our standard literature; and they form, in quantity at least, a respectable contribution from a single mind. But Johnson's mind is scarcely seen at its brightest if we do not add to the productions of his own pen the record of his colloquial wit and eloquence preserved by his admirable biographer, Boswell, whose renowned work first appeared, in two volumes quarto, in 1790; having, however, been preceded by the Journal of the Tour to the Hebrides, which was published the year after Johnson's death. It has been remarked, with truth, that his own works and Boswell's Life of him together have preserved a more complete portraiture of Johnson, of his intellect, his opinions, his manners, his whole man inward and outward, than has been handed down from one age to another of any other individual that ever lived. Certainly no celebrated figure of any past time still stands before our eyes so distinctly embodied as he does. If we will try, we shall find that all others are shadows, or mere outlines, in comparison; or, they seem to skulk about at a distance in the shade, while he is there fronting us in the full daylight, so that we see not only his worsted stockings and the metal buttons on his brown coat, but every feature of that massive countenance, as it is solemnized by meditation or lighted up in social converse, as his whole frame rolls about in triumphant laughter, or, as Cumberland saw the tender-hearted old man, standing beside his friend Garrick's open grave, at the foot of Shakespeare's monument, and bathed in tears. A noble heroic nature was that of this Samuel Johnson, beyond all controversy: not only did his failings lean to virtue's side—his very intellectual weaknesses and prejudices had something in them of strength and greatness; they were the exuberance and excess of a rich mind, not the stinted growth of a poor one. There was no touch of meanness in him: rude and awkward enough he was in

many points of mere demeanour, but he had the soul of a prince in real generosity, refinement, and elevation. Of a certain kind of intellectual faculty, also, his endowment was very high. His quickness of penetration, and readiness in every way, were probably as great as had ever been combined with the same solid qualities of mind. Scarcely before had there appeared so thoughtful a sage, and so grave a moralist, with so agile and sportive a wit. Rarely has so prompt and bright a wit been accompanied by so much real knowledge, sagacity, and weight of matter. But, as we have intimated, this happy union of opposite kinds of power was most complete, and only produced its full effect, in his colloquial displays, when, excited and unformalized, the man was really himself, and his strong nature forced its way onward without regard to anything but the immediate object to be achieved. In writing he is still the strong man, working away valiantly, but, as it were, with fetters upon his limbs, or a burden on his back; a sense of the conventionalities of his position seems to oppress him; his style becomes artificial and ponderous; the whole process of his intellectual exertion loses much of its elasticity and life; and, instead of hard blows and flashes of flame, there is too often, it must be confessed, a mere raising of clouds of dust and the din of inflated commonplace. Yet, as a writer, too, there is much in Johnson that is of no common character. It cannot be said that the world is indebted to him for many new truths, but he has given novel and often forcible and elegant expression to some old ones; the spirit of his philosophy is never other than manly and high-toned, as well as moral; his critical speculations, if not always very profound, are frequently acute and ingenious, and in manner generally lively, not seldom brilliant. Indeed, it may be said of Johnson, with all his faults and shortcomings, as of every man of true genius, that he is rarely or ever absolutely dull. Even his Ramblers, which we hold to be the most indigestible of his productions, are none of them mere leather or prunello; and his higher efforts, his Rasselas, his Preface to Shakespeare, and many passages in his Lives of the Poets, are throughout instinct with animation, and full of an eloquence which sometimes rises almost to poetry. Even his peculiar style, whatever we may allege against it, bears the stamp of the man of genius; it was thoroughly his own; and it not only reproduced itself, with variations, in the writings of some of the most distinguished of

his contemporaries, from Junius's Letters to Macpherson's Ossian, but, whether for good or for evil, has perceptibly influenced our literature, and even in some degree the progress of the language, onwards to the present day. Some of the characteristics of the Johnsonian style, no doubt, may be found in older writers, but, as a whole, it must be regarded as the invention of Johnson. No sentence-making at once so uniformly clear and exact, and so elaborately stately, measured, and sonorous, had proceeded habitually from any previous English pen. The pomposity and inflation of Johnson's composition abated considerably in his own later writings, and, as the cumbering flesh fell off, the nerve and spirit increased: the most happily executed parts of the Lives of the Poets offer almost a contrast to the oppressive rotundity of the Ramblers, produced thirty years before; and some eminent writers of a subsequent date, who have yet evidently formed their style upon his, have retained little or nothing of what, to a superficial inspection, seem the most marked characteristics of his manner of expression. Indeed, as we have said, there is perhaps no subsequent English prose-writer upon whose style that of Johnson has been altogether without its effect.*

Burke.

But the greatest, undoubtedly, of all our writers of this age was Burke, one of the most remarkable men of any age. Edmund Burke was born in Dublin, in 1730; but he came over in 1750 to the British metropolis, and from this time he mostly resided in England till his death, in 1797. In 1756 he published his celebrated Vindication of Natural Society, an imitation of the style, and a parody on the philosophy, of Lord Bolingbroke; and the same year his Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful. In 1757 appeared anonymously his Account of the European Settlements in America. In 1759 came out the first volume of The Annual

* Every reader who takes any interest in Johnson will remember the brilliant papers of Lord Macaulay in the Edinburgh Review, for September, 1831, and Mr. Carlyle, in the twenty-eighth number of Fraser's Magazine, for April, 1832.

Register, of which he is known to have written, or superintended the writing of, the historical part for several years. His public life commenced in 1761, with the appointment of private secretary to the chief secretary for Ireland, an office which carried him back for about four years to his native country. In 1766 he became a member of the English House of Commons; and from that date almost to the hour of his death, besides his exertions as a front figure in the debates and other business of parliament, from which he did not retire till 1794, he continued to dazzle the world by a succession of political writings such as certainly had never before been equalled in brilliancy and power. We can mention only those of greatest note:—his Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents, published in 1770; his Reflections on the Revolution in France, published in 1790; his Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs, in 1792; his Letter to a Noble Lord on his Pension, in 1796; his Letters on a Regicide Peace, in 1796 and 1797; his Observations on the Conduct of the Minority, in 1797; besides his several great speeches, revised and sent to the press by himself; that on American Taxation, in 1774; that on Conciliation with America, in 1775; that on the Economical Reform Bill, in 1780; that delivered in the Guildhall at Bristol previous to his election, the same year; that on Mr. Fox's India Bill, in 1783; and that on the Nabob of Arcot's Debts, in 1785. Those, perhaps the most splendid of all, which he delivered at the bar of the House of Lords in 1788 and 1789, on the impeachment of Mr. Hastings, have also been printed since his death from his own manuscript.*

* See also the highly curious, interesting, and important official publication of the Speeches of the Managers and Counsel in the Trial of Warren Hastings, to be completed in 4 vols., of which two have already appeared (1859 and 1860), under the authority of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, and the judicious and careful superintendence of Mr. E. A. Bond, Assistant Keeper of the Manuscripts in the British Museum. It appears that the actual shorthand notes of the reporters from the office of Mr. Gurney, appointed at the time to attend every sitting of the Court by the Committee of Managers, have fortunately been preserved, and from these principally the new version of the speeches has been drawn. Although some mistakes may have been made by the reporters, it is evident that their task has been executed generally in a very superior manner; and there can be no doubt that we have Burke's speeches here in a form considerably nearer to that in which they were actually delivered than as they are printed in the authentic edition of his works from his own papers. A comparison of the two texts shows the freedom Burke allowed himself in writing out what he had

Burke was our first, and is still our greatest, writer on the philosophy of practical politics. The mere metaphysics of that science, or what we may call by that term for want of a better, meaning thereby all abstract speculation and theorizing on the general subject of government without reference to the actual circumstances of the particular country and people to be governed, he held from the beginning to the end of his life in undisguised, perhaps in undue, contempt. This feeling is as strongly manifested in his very first publication, his covert attack on Bolingbroke, as either in his writings and speeches on the contest with the American colonies or in those of the French Revolution. He was, as we have said, emphatically a practical politician, and, above all, an English politician. In discussing questions of domestic politics, he constantly refused to travel beyond the landmarks of the constitution as he found it established; and the views he took of the politics of other countries were as far as possible regulated by the same principle. The question of a revolution, in so far as England was concerned, he did not hold to be one with which he had anything to do. Not only had it never been actually presented to him by the circumstances of the time; he did not conceive that it ever could come before him. He was, in fact, no believer in the possibility of any sudden and complete re-edification of the institutions of a great country; he left such transformations to Harlequin's wand and the machinists of the stage; he did not

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spoken, or intended to have spoken, and reducing it to the form in which he desired it to go down to posterity. "Not only," observes Mr. Bond (Introduction, xlii.), "is the language carefully revised, but the speech may be said to be remodelled. Many passages, in some instances containing charges of crimination, are suppressed, and new arguments and illustrations are freely introduced. The revised composition doubtless displays greater condensation of argument and refinement of diction, but is, I think, surpassed in energy of expression by the unaltered report of the words and ideas as they flowed from his imagination in the warmth of their first conception." At all events, we have here unquestionably by far the truest and most satisfactory evidence of what Burke's speaking really was; and that alone would invest the new publication with the highest interest. It is a most important contribution at once to his biography and to the history of English oratory. Nay, taken in connexion with his own reconstruction of the Speeches, it is not without value as throwing light upon the history of spoken eloquence generally, and more especially as an aid towards solving the question of in how far we probably have a true picture of the speaking of the great Greek and Roman orators in their recorded harangues.

think they could take place in a system so mighty and so infinitely complicated as that of the political organization of a nation. A constitution, too, in his idea, was not a thing, like a steam-engine, or a machine for threshing corn, that could be put together and set up in a few weeks or months, and that would work equally well wherever it was set up; he looked upon it rather as something that must in every case grow and gradually evolve itself out of the soil of the national mind and character, that must take its shape in a great measure from the prevalent habits and feelings to which it was to be accommodated, that would not work or stand at all unless it thus formed an integral part of the social system to which it belonged. The notion of a constitution artificially constructed, and merely as it were fastened upon a country by bolts and screws, was to him much the same as the notion of a human body performing the functions of life with no other than such a separable artificial head stuck upon it. A constitution was with him a thing of life. It could no more be set up of a sudden than a full-grown tree could be ordered from the manufacturer's and so set up. Like a tree, it must have its roots intertwisted with the earth on which it stands, even as it has its branches extended over it. Or rather, the constitution is to him the earth itself—the one solid enduring basis on which alone any rational or useful speculation can be reared. At the least, it is his Bible, the great authoritative text-book of his political religion, which he no more looks for anything to contradict or supersede than the theologian looks for a new revelation. It may be remarked that Burke's peculiar faculties did not fit him, any more than his tastes, for nice and subtle inquisition into the essences of things; as may be perceived, to go no farther, from his early work on the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful, which, elegant and ingenious as it is, must be deemed a failure in so far as respects its professed object, and the spirit of which, as has been observed, is, on the whole, certainly rather critical than metaphysical.* In the great fields of politics and religion, besides, occupied as they are with men's

* See art. on Burke in Penny Cyclopædia, vi. 31. See also an examination and refutation of Burke's theory in an article in the same work, vol. xxiii. pp. 186–189, on Sublimity, which is not only the best disquisition, at least in the English language, on the philosophy of that subject, but may almost be said to be the only one of any value.

substantial interests, he regarded inquiries into first principles as worse than vain and worthless, as much more likely to mislead and pervert than to afford instruction or right guidance; and it is remarkable that this feeling, too, though deepened and strengthened by the experience of his after-life, and, above all, exasperated by the events to which his attention was most strongly directed in his latest days into an intense dread and horror of the confusion and wide-spread ruin that might be wrought by the assumption of so incompetent a power as mere human ratiocination to regulate all things according to its own conceit, was entertained and expressed by him with great distinctness at the outset of his career. It was in this spirit, indeed, that he wrote his Vindication of Natural Society, with the design of showing how anything whatever might be either attacked or defended with great plausibility by the method in which the highest and most intricate philosophical questions were discussed by Lord Bolingbroke. He "is satisfied," he says in his Preface, "that a mind which has no restraint from a sense of its own weakness, of its subordinate rank in the creation, and of the extreme danger of letting the imagination loose upon some subjects, may very plausibly attack everything the most excellent and venerable; that it would not be difficult to criticise the Creation itself; and that, if we were to examine the divine fabrics by our ideas of reason and fitness, and to use the same method of attack by which some men have assaulted revealed religion, we might, with as good colour, and with the same success, make the wisdom and power of God in his Creation appear to many no better than foolishness." But, on the other hand, within the boundary by which he conceived himself to be properly limited and restrained, there never was either a more ingenious and profound investigator or a bolder reformer than Burke. He had, indeed, more in him of the orator and of the poet than of the mere reasoner; but yet, like Bacon, whom altogether he greatly resembled in intellectual character, an instinctive sagacity and penetration generally led him to see where the truth lay, and then his boundless ingenuity supplied him readily with all the considerations and arguments which the exposition of the matter required, and the fervour of his awakened fancy with striking illustration and impassioned eloquence in a measure hardly to be elsewhere found intermingled and incorporated with the same profoundness, extent, and

many-sidedness of view. For in this Burke is distinguished from nearly all other orators, and it is a distinction that somewhat interferes with his mere oratorical power, that he is both too reflective and too honest to confine himself to the contemplation of only one side of any question he takes up: he selects, of course, for advocacy and inculcation the particular view which he holds to be the sound one, and often it will no doubt be thought by those who dissent from him that he does not do justice to some of the considerations that stand opposed to his own opinion; but still it is not his habit to overlook such adverse considerations; he shows himself at least perfectly aware of their existence, even when he possibly underrates their importance. For the immediate effect of his eloquence, as we have said, it might have been better if his mind had not been so Argus-eyed to all the various conflicting points of every case that he discussed—if, instead of thus continually looking before and after on all sides of him, and stopping, whenever two or more apparently opposite considerations came in his way, to balance or reconcile them, he could have surrendered himself to the one view with which his hearers were prepared strongly to sympathise, and carried them along with him in a whirlwind of passionate declamation. But, "born for the universe," and for all time, he was not made for such sacrifice of truth, and all high, enduring things, to the triumph of an hour. And he has not gone without his well-earned reward. If it was objected to him in his own day that, "too deep for his hearers," he

> "still went on refining,
> And thought of convincing while they thought of dining,"

that searching philosophy which pervades his speeches and writings, and is there wedded in such happy union to glowing words and poetic imagery, has rescued them alone from the neglect and oblivion that have overtaken all the other oratory and political pamphleteering of that day, however more loudly lauded at the time, and has secured to them an existence as extended as that of the language, and to their eloquence and wisdom whatever admiration and whatever influence and authority they may be entitled to throughout all coming generations. The writings of Burke are, indeed, the only English political writings of a past age that continue to be read in the present. And they are now perhaps more studied, and their

value, both philosophical and oratorical, better and more highly appreciated, than even when they were first produced. They were at first probably received, even by those who rated them highest and felt their power the most, as little more than mere party appeals—which, indeed, to a considerable extent most of them were, for their author, from the circumstances of his position and of the time, was of necessity involved in the great battle of faction which then drew into its maelstrom everything littlest and greatest, meanest and loftiest—and, as was his nature, he fought that fight, while that was the work to be done, like a man, with his whole heart, and mind, and soul, and strength. But it can hardly be said in prosaic verity, as it has been said in the liveliness and levity of verse, that he "to party gave up what was meant for mankind." He gave up nothing to his party, except his best exertions for the time being, and for the end immediately in view, while he continued to serve under its banner. He separated himself from his party, and even from the friends and associates with whom he had passed his life, when, whether rightly or wrongly, he conceived that a higher duty than that of fidelity to his party-banner called upon him to take that course. For that Burke, in leaving the ranks of the opposition in the year 1790, or rather in declining to go along with the main body of the opposition in the view which they took at that particular moment of the French Revolution, acted from the most conscientious motives and the strongest convictions, we may assume to be now completely admitted by all whose opinions anybody thinks worth regarding. The notion that he was bought off by the ministry —he who never to the end of his life joined the ministry, or ceased to express his entire disapprobation of their conduct of the war with France—he, by whom, in fact, they were controlled and coerced, not he by them—the old cry that he was paid to attack the French Revolution, by the pension, forsooth, that was bestowed upon him five years after—all this is now left to the rabid ignorance of your mere pothouse politician. Those who have really read and studied what Burke has written know that there was nothing new in the views he proclaimed after the breaking out of that mighty convulsion, nothing differing from or inconsistent with the principles and doctrines on the subject of government he had always held and expressed. In truth, he could not have joined in the chorus of

acclamation with which Fox and many of his friends greeted the advent of the French Revolution without abandoning the political philosophy of his whole previous life. As we have elsewhere observed, "his principles were altogether averse from a purely democratic constitution of government from the first. He always, indeed, denied that he was a man of aristocratic inclinations, meaning by that one who favoured the aristocratic more than the popular element in the constitution: but he no more for all that ever professed any wish wholly to extinguish the former element than the latter. . . . . The only respect in which his latest writings really differ from those of early date is, that they evince a more excited sense of the dangers of popular delusion and passion, and urge with greater earnestness the importance of those restraining institutions which the author conceives, and always did conceive, to be necessary for the stability of governments and the conservation of society. But this is nothing more than the change of topic that is natural to a new occasion." * Or, as he has himself finely said, in defending his own consistency—"A man, who, among various objects of his equal regard, is secure of some, and full of anxiety for the fate of others, is apt to go to much greater lengths in his preference of the objects of his immediate solicitude than Mr. Burke has ever done. A man so circumstanced often seems to undervalue, to vilify, almost to reprobate and disown, those that are out of danger. This is the voice of nature and truth, and not of inconsistency and false pretence. The danger of anything very dear to us removes, for the moment, every other affection from the mind. When Priam has his whole thoughts employed on the body of his Hector, he repels with indignation, and drives from him with a thousand reproaches, his surviving sons, who with an officious piety crowded about him to offer their assistance. A good critic would say that this is a masterstroke, and marks a deep understanding of nature in the father of poetry. He would despise a Zoilus, who would conclude from this passage that Homer meant to represent this man of affliction as hating, or being indifferent and cold in his affections to, the poor relics of his house, or that he preferred a dead carcase to his living children." †

* Art. on Burke, in Penny Cyclopædia, vi. 35.

† Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs.

We shall now proceed to illustrate, as far as our limited space will allow, both the variety and the progress of Burke's style by a series of extracts from his works; and we will begin with a passage from his earliest separate publication (so far as is known), his Letter on Natural Society, written in imitation of Lord Bolingbroke, which appeared, as already noticed, in 1756, two years after Bolingbroke's death, and when Burke was only twenty-six. The full title of this remarkable performance is A Vindication of Natural Society; or, A View of the Miseries and Evils arising to mankind from every species of Artificial Society; in a letter to Lord * * * By a late Noble Writer. In one respect at least it certainly does Bolingbroke no injustice; he never wrote anything superior, or we might safely say even equal, in mere expression to the best passages of this ingenious and brilliant declamation. In the original edition, of course, there is no intimation of the true authorship,* but the design with which it was written is distinctly explained in the preface which accompanies it in all the editions of Burke's collected works, and a part of which we have quoted a page or two back. Having disposed of both despotic and aristocratical governments, it proceeds:—

Thus, my Lord, we have pursued *Aristocracy* through its whole progress; we have seen the seeds, the growth, and the fruit. It could boast none of the advantages of a *despotism*, miserable as those advantages were, and it was overloaded with an exuberance of mischiefs unknown even to *despotism* itself. In effect, it is no more than a disorderly tyranny. This form, therefore, could be little approved, even in speculation, by those who were capable of thinking, and could be less borne in practice by any who were capable of feeling. However, the fruitful policy of man was not yet exhausted. He had yet another farthing candle to supply the deficiencies of

* On the contrary, it is introduced by an Advertisement (afterwards withdrawn) in accordance with the title:—"The following Letter appears to have been written about the year 1748, and the Person to whom it is addressed need not be pointed out. As it is probable the Noble Writer had no Design that it should ever appear in Publick, this will account for his having kept no Copy of it, and consequently for it's not appearing amongst the rest of his Works. By what Means it came into the Hands of the Editor, is not at all material to the Publick, any farther than as such an Account might tend to authenticate the Genuineness of it; and for this it was thought it might safely rely on it's own internal Evidence." Such a slight transparent veil, however, was evidently intended only to keep up appearances, and not to take in anybody. This first edition, now before us, is an octavo pamphlet extending to 106 pages, the title-page describing it as "Printed for M. Cooper in Pater-noster Row, 1756. [Price One Shilling and Six-pence.]"

the sun. This was the third form, known by political writers under the name of *Democracy*. Here the people transacted all public business, or the greater part of it, in their own persons: their laws were made by themselves, and, upon any failure of duty, their officers were accountable to themselves, and to them only. In all appearance they had secured by this method the advantages of order and good government, without paying their liberty for the purchase. Now, my Lord, we are come to the masterpiece of Grecian refinement and Roman solidity, a popular government. The earliest and most celebrated republic of this model was that of Athens. It was constructed by no less an artist than the celebrated poet and philosopher, Solon. But no sooner was this political vessel launched from the stocks, than it overset, even in the lifetime of the builder. A tyranny immediately supervened; not by a foreign conquest, not by accident, but by the very nature and constitution of a *democracy*. An artful man became popular, the people had power in their hands, and they devolved a considerable share of their power upon their favourite; and the only use he made of this power was to plunge those who gave it into slavery. Accident restored their liberty, and the same good fortune produced men of uncommon abilities and uncommon virtues amongst them. But these abilities were suffered to be of little service either to their possessors or to the state. Some of those men, for whose sakes alone we read their history, they banished; others they imprisoned; and all they treated with various circumstances of the most shameful ingratitude. Republics have many things in the spirit of absolute monarchy, but none more than this. A shining merit is ever hated or suspected in a popular assembly, as well as in a court; and all services done the state are looked upon as dangerous to the rulers, whether sultans or senators. The *Ostracism* of Athens was built upon this principle. The giddy people whom we have now under consideration, being elated with some flashes of success, which they owed to nothing less than any merit of their own, began to tyrannize over their equals, who had associated with them for their common defence. With their prudence, they renounced all appearance of justice. They entered into wars rashly and wantonly. If they were unsuccessful, instead of growing wiser by their misfortune, they threw the whole blame of their own misconduct on the ministers who had advised, and the generals who had conducted, those wars; until by degrees they had cut off all who could serve them in their councils or their battles. If at any time these wars had a happier issue, it was no less difficult to deal with them on account of their pride and insolence. Furious in their adversity, tyrannical in their successes, a commander had more trouble to concert his defence before the people than to plan the operations of the campaign. It was not uncommon for a general, under the horrid *despotism* of the Roman emperors, to be ill received in proportion to the greatness of his services. Agricola is a strong instance of this. No man had done greater things, nor with more honest ambition. Yet, on his return to Court, he was obliged to enter Rome with all the secrecy of a criminal. He went to the palace, not like a victorious commander who had merited, and might demand, the greatest

rewards, but like an offender who had come to supplicate a pardon for his crimes. His reception was answerable. *Exceptusque brevi osculo et nullo sermone, turbæ servientium immixtus est.* Yet in that worst season of this worst of monarchical tyrannies, modesty, discretion, and coolness of temper formed some kind of security even for the highest merit. But at Athens, the wisest and best studied behaviour was not a sufficient guard for a man of great capacity. Some of their bravest commanders were obliged to fly their country, some to enter into the service of its enemies, rather than abide a popular determination on their conduct, lest, as one of them said, their giddiness might make the people condemn where they meant to acquit,—to throw in a black bean even when they intended a white one.

The Athenians made a very rapid progress to the most enormous excesses. The people, under no restraint, soon grew dissolute, luxurious, and idle. They renounced all labour, and began to subsist themselves from the public revenues. They lost all concern for their common honour or safety, and could bear no advice that tended to reform them. At this time truth became offensive to those lords, the people, and most highly dangerous to the speaker. The orators no longer ascended the *rostrum* but to corrupt them further with the most fulsome adulation. These orators were all bribed by foreign princes on the one side or the other. And, beside its own parties, in this city there were parties, and avowed ones too, for the Persians, Spartans, and Macedonians, supported each of them by one or more demagogues pensioned and bribed to this iniquitous service. The people, forgetful of all virtue and public spirit, and intoxicated with the flatteries of their orators (these courtiers of republics, and endowed with the distinguishing characteristics of all other courtiers),—this people, I say, at last arrived at that pitch of madness, that they coolly and deliberately, by an express law, made it capital for any man to propose an application of the immense sums squandered in public shows even to the most necessary purposes of the state. When you see the people of this republic banishing and murdering their best and ablest citizens, dissipating the public treasure with the most senseless extravagance, and spending their whole time, as spectators or actors, in playing, fiddling, dancing, or singing, does it not, my Lord, strike your imagination with the image of a sort of complex Nero? And does it not strike you with the greater horror, when you observe, not one man only, but a whole city, grown drunk with pride and power, running with a rage of folly into the same mean and senseless debauchery and extravagance? But, if this people resembled Nero in their extravagance, much more did they resemble and even exceed him in cruelty and injustice. In the time of Pericles, one of the most celebrated times in the history of that commonwealth, a king of Egypt sent them a donation of corn. This they were mean enough to accept; and, had the Egyptian prince intended the ruin of this city of wicked bedlamites, he could not have taken a more effectual method to do it than by such an ensnaring largess. The distribution of this bounty caused a quarrel; the majority set on foot an inquiry into the title of the citizens, and upon a vain pretence of illegitimacy, newly and occasionally set up, they deprived

of their share of the royal donation no less than five thousand of their own body. They went further; they disfranchised them; and, having once begun with an act of injustice, they could set no bounds to it. Not content with cutting them off from the rights of citizens, they plundered these unfortunate wretches of all their substance; and, to crown this masterpiece of violence and tyranny, they actually sold every man of the five thousand as slaves in the public market. Observe, my Lord, that the five thousand we here speak of were cut off from a body of no more than nineteen thousand; for the entire number of citizens was no greater at that time. Could the tyrant who wished the Roman people but one neck—could the tyrant Caligula himself have done, nay could he scarcely wish for a greater mischief, than to have cut off at one stroke a fourth of his people? Or has the cruelty of that series of sanguine tyrants, the Cæsars, ever presented such a piece of flagrant and extensive wickedness? The whole history of this celebrated republic is but one tissue of rashness, folly, ingratitude, injustice, tumult, violence, and tyranny—and, indeed, of every species of wickedness that can well be imagined. This was a city of wise men, in which a minister could not exercise his functions; a warlike people, amongst whom a general did not dare either to gain or lose a battle; a learned nation, in which a philosopher could not venture on a free inquiry. This was the city which banished Themistocles, starved Aristides, forced into exile Miltiades, drove out Anaxagoras, and poisoned Socrates. This was a city which changed the form of its government with the moon; eternal conspiracies, revolutions daily, nothing fixed and established. A republic, as an ancient philosopher has observed, is no one species of government, but a magazine of every species: here you find every sort of it, and that in the worst form. As there is a perpetual change, one rising and the other falling, you have all the violence and wicked policy by which a beginning power must always acquire its strength, and all the weakness by which falling states are brought to a complete destruction.

In some respects this early composition may stand a comparison with anything its author ever afterwards wrote. In free and musical flow his style had already nothing further to acquire; and we have also here not a little of the fulness and hurry of illustration, the splendour of colouring, and the impassioned fervour of his latest eloquence. In its next stage his manner became rather less brilliant and impetuous; what he now for a time chiefly aimed at appears to have been precision and force. The following is from his admirable exposition of the principles of his political party, entitled Thoughts on the Cause of the Present Discontents, published in 1770, or fourteen years after the Vindication of Natural Society.—

The House of Commons was supposed originally to be no part of the standing government of this country. It was considered as a controul,

issuing immediately from the people, and speedily to be resolved into the mass from whence it arose. In this respect it was in the higher part of government what juries are in the lower. The capacity of a magistrate being transitory, and that of a citizen permanent, the latter capacity it was hoped would of course preponderate in all discussions, not only between the people and the standing authority of the crown, but between the people and the fleeting authority of the House of Commons itself. It was hoped, that, being of a middle nature between subject and government, they would feel with a more tender and a nearer interest every thing that concerned the people than the other remoter and more permanent parts of legislature.

Whatever alterations time, and the necessary accommodation of business, may have introduced, this character can never be sustained unless the House of Commons shall be made to bear some stamp of the actual disposition of the people at large. It would, among public misfortunes, be an evil more natural and more tolerable that the House of Commons should be infected with every epidemical frenzy of the people, as this would indicate some consanguinity, some sympathy of nature, with their constituents, than that they should in all cases be wholly untouched by the opinions and feelings of the people out of doors. By this want of sympathy they would cease to be a House of Commons. For it is not the derivation of the power of that House from the people which makes it in a distinct sense their representative. The king is the representative of the people; so are the Lords; so are the Judges. They all are trustees for the people, as well as the Commons; because no power is given for the sole sake of the holder; and, although government certainly is an institution of divine authority, yet its forms, and the persons who administer it, all originate from the people.

A popular origin cannot therefore be the characteristical distinction of a popular representative. This belongs equally to all parts of government, and in all forms. The virtue, spirit, and essence of a House of Commons consists in its being the express image of the feelings of the nation. It was not instituted to be a controul *upon* the people, as of late it has been taught, by a doctrine of the most pernicious tendency. It was designed as a controul *for* the people. Other institutions have been formed for the purpose of checking popular excesses; and they are, I apprehend, fully adequate to their object. If not, they ought to be made so. The House of Commons, as it was never intended for the support of peace and subordination, is miserably appointed for that service; having no stronger weapon than its mace, and no better officer than its sergeant-at-arms, which it can command of its own proper authority. A vigilant and jealous eye over executory and judicial magistracy, an anxious care of public money, an openness, approaching towards facility, to public complaint; these seem to be the true characteristics of a House of Commons. But an addressing House of Commons and a petitioning nation—a House of Commons full of confidence while the nation is plunged in despair—in the utmost harmony with ministers whom the people regard with the utmost abhorrence—who vote thanks, when the public opinion calls upon them for impeachments—

who are eager to grant, when the general voice demands account—who, in all disputes between the people and administration, presume against the people—who punish their disorders, but refuse even to inquire into the provocations to them; this is an unnatural, a monstrous state of things in this constitution. Such an assembly may be a great, wise, awful senate; but it is not, to any popular purpose, a House of Commons. This change from an immediate state of procuration and delegation to a course of acting as from original power is the way in which all the popular magistracies in the world have been perverted from their purposes. It is indeed their greatest and sometimes their incurable corruption. For there is a material distinction between that corruption by which particular points are carried against reason (this is a thing which cannot be prevented by human wisdom, and is of less consequence), and the corruption of the principle itself. For then the evil is not accidental but settled. The distemper becomes the natural habit.

At a later date, again, although he could when he chose confine himself to a haughty severity of diction, in which few figures and little visible flame of passion were suffered to relieve the hard native force and impressivness of the matter—as, for instance, in the Address to the King on the War with America, which he proposed that the opposition should present in 1777, —his style in general returns to a richer and warmer character, both in his speeches and his writings. The following is from his famous Speech delivered at Bristol previous to the election in September, 1780, at which he was rejected by the constituency he had represented during the preceding six years, for the part he had taken in the recent mitigation of the penal laws against the Roman Catholics:—

A statute was fabricated in the year 1699, by which the saying mass (a church-service in the Latin tongue, not exactly the same as our liturgy, but very near it, and containing no offence whatsoever against the laws, or against good morals) was forged into a crime, punishable with perpetual imprisonment. The teaching school, an useful and virtuous occupation, even the teaching in a private family, was in every Catholic subjected to the same unproportioned punishment. Your industry, and the bread of your children, was taxed for a pecuniary reward to stimulate avarice to do what nature refused, to inform and prosecute on this law. Every Roman Catholic was, under the same law, to forfeit his estate to his nearest Protestant relation, until, through a profession of what he did not believe, he redeemed by his hypocrisy what the law had transferred to the kinsman as the recompense of his profligacy. When thus turned out of doors from his paternal estate, he was disabled from acquiring any other by any industry, donation, or charity; but was rendered a foreigner in his native

land, only because he retained the religion, along with the property, handed down to him from those who had been the old inhabitants of that land before him.

Does any one who hears me approve this scheme of things, or think there is common justice, common sense, or common honesty in any part of it? If any does, let him say it, and I am ready to discuss the point with temper and candour. But, instead of approving, I perceive a virtuous indignation beginning to rise in your minds on the mere cold stating of the statute.

But what will you feel when you know from history how this statute passed, and what were the motives, and what the mode of making it? A party in this nation, enemies to the system of the Revolution, were in opposition to the government of King William. They knew that our glorious deliverer was an enemy to all persecution. They knew that he came to free us from slavery and popery, out of a country where a third of the people are contented Catholics under a Protestant government. He came, with a part of his army composed of those very Catholics, to overset the power of a popish prince. Such is the effect of a tolerating spirit; and so much is liberty served in every way, and by all persons, by a manly adherence to its own principles. Whilst freedom is true to itself, every thing becomes subject to it; and its very adversaries are an instrument in its hands.

The party I speak of (like some amongst us who would disparage the best friends of their country) resolved to make the king either violate his principles of toleration, or incur the odium of protecting Papists. They therefore brought in this bill, and made it purposely wicked and absurd that it might be rejected. The then court-party, discovering their game, turned the tables on them, and returned their bill to them stuffed with still greater absurdities, that its loss might lie upon its original authors. They, finding their own ball thrown back to them, kicked it back again to their adversaries. And thus this act, loaded with the double injustice of two parties, neither of whom intended to pass what they hoped the other would be persuaded to reject, went through the legislature, contrary to the real wish of all parts of it, and of all the parties that composed it. In this manner these insolent and profligate factions, as if they were playing with balls and counters, made a sport of the fortunes and the liberties of their fellow-creatures. Other acts of persecution have been acts of malice. This was a perversion of justice from wantonness and petulance. Look into the History of Bishop Burnet. He is a witness without exception.

The effects of the act have been as mischievous as its origin was ludicrous and shameful. From that time every person of that communion, lay and ecclesiastic, has been obliged to fly from the face of day. The clergy, concealed in garrets of private houses, or obliged to take a shelter (hardly safe to themselves, but infinitely dangerous to their country) under the privileges of foreign ministers, officiated as their servants, and under their protection. The whole body of the Catholics, condemned to beggary and to ignorance in their native land, have been obliged to learn the principle of letters, at the hazard of all their other principles, from the charity of

your enemies. They have been taxed to their ruin at the pleasure of necessitous and profligate relations, and according to the measure of their necessity and profligacy. Examples of this are many and affecting. Some of them are known by a friend who stands near me in this hall. It is but six or seven years since a clergyman of the name of Malony, a man of morals, neither guilty nor accused of any thing noxious to the state, was condemned to perpetual imprisonment for exercising the functions of his religion; and, after lying in jail two or three years, was relieved by the mercy of government from perpetual imprisonment, on condition of perpetual banishment. A brother of the Earl of Shrewsbury, a Talbot, a name respectable in this country whilst its glory is any part of its concern, was hauled to the bar of the Old Bailey, among common felons, and only escaped the same doom either by some error in the process, or that the wretch who brought him there could not correctly describe his person; I now forget which. In short, the persecution would never have relented for a moment, if the Judges, superseding (though with an ambiguous example) the strict rule of their artificial duty by the higher obligation of their conscience, did not constantly throw every difficulty in the way of such informers. But so ineffectual is the power of legal evasion against legal iniquity, that it was but the other day that a lady of condition, beyond the middle of life, was on the point of being stript of her whole fortune by a near relation, to whom she had been a friend and benefactor; and she must have been totally ruined, without a power of redress or mitigation from the courts of law, had not the legislature itself rushed in, and by a special act of parliament rescued her from the injustice of its own statutes. One of the acts authorizing such things was that which we in part repealed; knowing what our duty was, and doing that duty as men of honour and virtue, as good Protestants, and as good citizens. Let him stand forth that disapproves what we have done. . . . . .

As to the opinion of the people, which some think in such cases is to be implicitly obeyed; nearly two years' tranquillity, which followed the act, and its instant imitation in Ireland, proved abundantly that the late horrible spirit was, in a great measure, the effect of insidious art, and perverse industry, and gross misrepresentation. But suppose that the dislike had been much more deliberate, and much more general, than I am persuaded it was. When we know that the opinions of even the greatest multitudes are the standard of rectitude, I shall think myself obliged to make those opinions the masters of my conscience. But, if it may be doubted whether Omnipotence itself is competent to alter the essential constitution of right and wrong, sure I am that such *things* as they and I are possessed of no such power. No man carries further than I do the policy of making government pleasing to the people. But the widest range of this politic complaisance is confined within the limits of justice. I would not only consult the interest of the people, but I would cheerfully gratify their humours. We are all a sort of children that must be soothed and managed. I think I am not austere or formal in my nature. I would bear, I would even myself play my part in, any innocent buffooneries, to divert them.

But I never will act the tyrant for their amusement. If they will mix malice in their sports, I shall never consent to throw them any living, sentient creature whatsoever, no, not so much as a kitling, to torment.

"But, if I profess all this impolitic stubbornness, I may chance never to be elected into parliament." It is certainly not pleasing to be put out of the public service. But I wish to be a member of parliament to have my share of doing good and resisting evil. It would therefore be absurd to renounce my objects, in order to obtain my seat. I deceive myself, indeed, most grossly, if I had not much rather pass the remainder of my life hidden in the recesses of the deepest obscurity, feeding my mind even with the visions and imaginations of such things, than to be placed on the most splendid throne of the universe, tantalized with a denial of the practice of all which can make the greatest situation any other than the greatest curse. Gentlemen, I have had my day. I can never sufficiently express my gratitude to you for having set me in a place wherein I could lend the slightest help to great and laudable designs. If I have had my share in any measure giving quiet to private property, and private conscience; if by my vote I have aided in securing to families the best possession, peace; if I have joined in reconciling kings to their subjects, and subjects to their prince; if I have assisted to loosen the foreign holdings of the citizen, and taught him to look for his protection to the laws of his country, and for his comfort to the good-will of his countrymen; if I have thus taken my part with the best of men in the best of their actions; I can shut the book: I might wish to read a page or two more, but this is enough for my measure. I have not lived in vain.

And now, gentlemen, on this serious day, when I come, as it were, to make up my account with you, let me take to myself some degree of honest pride on the nature of the charges that are brought against me. I do not here stand before you accused of venality, or of neglect of duty. It is not said, that, in the long period of my service, I have in a single instance sacrificed the slightest of your interests to my ambition, or to my fortune. It is not alleged, that, to gratify any anger or revenge of my own, or of my party, I have had a share in wronging or oppressing any description of men, or any one man of any description. No! the charges against me are all of one kind;—that I have pushed the principles of general justice and benevolence too far; further than a cautious policy would warrant, and further than the opinions of many would go along with me. In every accident which may happen through life, in pain, in sorrow, in depression, and distress—I will call to mind this accusation, and be comforted.

As another specimen of Burke's spoken eloquence we will give from his Speech on the case of the Nabob of Arcot, delivered in the House of Commons on the 28th of February, 1785, the passage containing the description of Hyder Ali's devastation of the Carnatic:—

When at length Hyder Ali found that he had to do with men who either

would sign no convention, or whom no treaty and no signature could bind, and who were the determined enemies of human intercourse itself, he decreed to make the country possessed by these incorrigible and predestinated criminals a memorable example to mankind. He resolved, in the gloomy recesses of a mind capacious of such things, to leave the whole Carnatic an everlasting monument of vengeance, and to put perpetual desolation as a barrier between him and those against whom the faith which holds the moral elements of the world together was no protection. He became at length so confident of his force, so collected in his might, that he made no secret whatsoever of his dreadful resolution. Having terminated his disputes with every enemy, and every rival, who buried their mutual animosities in their common detestation against the creditors of the Nabob of Arcot,* he drew from every quarter whatever a savage ferocity could add to his new rudiments in the arts of destruction; and, compounding all the materials of fury, havoc, and desolation, into one black cloud, he hung for a while on the declivities of the mountains. Whilst the authors of all the evils were idly and stupidly gazing on this menacing meteor, which blackened all their horizon, it suddenly burst, and poured down the whole of its contents upon the plains of the Carnatic. Then ensued a scene of woe, the like of which no eye had seen, no heart conceived, and which no tongue can adequately tell. All the horrors of war before known or heard of were mercy to that new havoc. A storm of universal fire blasted every field, consumed every house, destroyed every temple. The miserable inhabitants, flying from their flaming villages, in part were slaughtered; others, without regard to sex, to age, to the respect of rank, or sacredness of function, fathers torn from children, husbands from wives, enveloped in a whirlwind of cavalry, and amidst the goading spears of drivers, and the trampling of pursuing horses, were swept into captivity in an unknown and hostile land. Those who were able to evade this tempest fled to the walled cities. But, escaping from fire, sword, and exile, they fell into the jaws of famine.

The alms of the settlement, in this dreadful exigency, were certainly liberal; and all was done by charity that private charity could do; but it was a people in beggary, a nation which stretched out its hands for food. For months together these creatures of sufferance, whose very excess and luxury in their most plenteous days had fallen short of the allowance of our austerest fasts, silent, patient, resigned, without sedition or disturbance, almost without complaint, perished by an hundred a day in the streets of Madras; every day seventy at least laid their bodies in the streets, or on the glacis of Tanjore, and expired of famine in the granary of India. I was going to awake your justice towards this unhappy part of our fellow-citizens by bringing before you some of the circumstances of this plague of hunger. Of all the calamities which beset and waylay the life of man, this comes the nearest to our heart, and is that wherein the proudest of us

* The designs upon Hyder, which provoked this retaliation on his part, are represented in the speech as the scheme of the Nabob's English creditors.

all feels himself to be nothing more than he is: but I find myself unable to manage it with decorum; these details are of a species of horror so nauseous and disgusting; they are so degrading to the sufferers and to the hearers; they are so humiliating to human nature itself; that, on better thoughts, I find it more advisable to throw a pall over this hideous object, and to leave it to your general conceptions.

For eighteen months without intermission, this destruction raged from the gates of Madras to the gates of Tanjore; and so completely did these masters in their art, Hyder Ali and his ferocious son, absolve themselves of their impious vow, that, when the British armies traversed, as they did, the Carnatic for hundreds of miles in all directions, through the whole line of their march they did not see one man, not one woman, not one child, not one four-footed beast of any description whatever. One dead, uniform silence reigned over the whole region.

With this may be compared the much longer and still more powerful description of the cruelties alleged to have been perpetrated by the Rajah Debi Sing upon the ryots of Rungpore and Dinagepore, contained in the opening Speech delivered at the bar of the House of Lords on the fifth day of the trial of Warren Hastings, in February, 1788. It ought to be read both in the report printed from Burke's own papers in the authentic edition of his works, and also in Mr. Bond's edition of the Speeches (Vol. I. pp. 143, *et seq.*). And there may be seen how he triumphs over the difficulties of a subject more perilous than that of the sufferings from hunger of the inhabitants of the Carnatic. There is nowhere to be found a more wonderful example of how the fire of strong imagination burns out all stains.

It is a mistake to suppose that either imagination or passion is apt to become weaker as the other powers of the mind strengthen and acquire larger scope. The history of all the greatest poetical minds of all times and countries confutes this notion. Burke's imagination grew with his intellect, by which it was nourished, with his ever-extending realm of thought, with his constantly increasing experience of life and knowledge of every kind; and his latest writings are his most splendid as well as his most profound. Undoubtedly the work in which his eloquence is at once the most highly finished, and the most impregnated with philosophy and depth of thought, is his Reflections on the French Revolution. But this work is so generally known, at least in its most striking passages, that we may satisfy ourselves with a single short extract:—

You will observe, that, from Magna Charta to the Declaration of Rights, it has been the uniform policy of our constitution to claim and assert our liberties as an *entailed inheritance*, derived to us from our forefathers, and to be transmitted to our posterity; as an estate specially belonging to the people of this kingdom, without any reference whatever to any other more general or prior right. By this means our constitution preserves an unity in so great a diversity of its parts. We have an inheritable crown; an inheritable peerage; and a House of Commons and a people inheriting privileges, franchises, and liberties from a long line of ancestors.

This policy appears to me to be the result of profound reflection; or rather the happy effect of following nature, which is wisdom without reflection, and above it. A spirit of innovation is generally the result of a selfish temper and confined views. People will not look forward to posterity, who never look backward to their ancestors. Besides, the people of England well know, that the idea of inheritance furnishes a sure principle of conservation, and a sure principle of transmission, without at all excluding a principle of improvement. It leaves acquisition free: but it secures what it acquires. Whatever advantages are obtained by a state proceeding on these maxims are locked fast as in a sort of family settlement: grasped as in a kind of mortmain for ever. By a constitutional policy, working after the pattern of nature, we receive, we hold, we transmit our government and our privileges, in the same manner in which we enjoy and transmit our property and our lives. The institutions of policy, the goods of fortune, the gifts of Providence, are handed down, to us and from us, in the same course and order. Our political system is placed in a just correspondence and symmetry with the order of the world, and with the mode of existence decreed to a permanent body composed of transitory parts; wherein, by the disposition of a stupendous wisdom, moulding together the great mysterious incorporation of the human race, the whole at one time is never old, or middle-aged, or young, but, in a condition of unchangeable constancy, moves on through the varied tenor of perpetual decay, fall, renovation, and progression. Thus, by preserving the method of nature in the conduct of the state, in what we improve we are never wholly new; in what we retain we are never wholly obsolete. By adhering in this manner, and on these principles, to our forefathers, we are guided, not by the superstition of antiquarians, but by the spirit of philosophic analogy. In this choice of inheritance we have given to our frame of polity the image of a relation in blood; binding up the constitution of our country with our dearest domestic ties; adopting our fundamental laws into the bosom of our family affections; keeping inseparable, and cherishing with the warmth of all their combined and mutually reflected charities, our state, our hearths, our sepulchres, and our altars.

Through the same plan of a conformity to nature in our artificial institutions, and by calling in the aid of her unerring and powerful instincts to fortify the fallible and feeble contrivances of our reason, we have derived several other, and those no small, benefits from considering our liberties in the light of an inheritance. Always acting as if in the presence

of canonized forefathers, the spirit of freedom, leading in itself to misrule and excess, is tempered with an awful gravity. This idea of a liberal descent inspires us with a sense of habitual native dignity, which prevents that upstart insolence almost inevitably adhering to and disgracing those who are the first acquirers of any distinction. By this means our liberty becomes a noble freedom. It carries an imposing and majestic aspect. It has a pedigree and illustrating ancestors. It has its bearings and its ensigns armorial. It has its gallery of portraits; its monumental inscriptions; its records, evidences, and titles. We procure reverence to our civil institutions on the principle upon which nature teaches us to revere individual men; on account of their age, and on account of those from whom they are descended. All your sophisters cannot produce any thing better adapted to preserve a rational and manly freedom than the course that we have pursued, who have chosen our nature rather than our speculations, our breasts rather than our inventions, for the great conservatories and magazines of our rights and privileges.

The Reflections appeared in 1790. We shall not give any extract from the Letter to a Noble Lord on the attacks made upon him in the House of Lords by the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Lauderdale, which, as it is one of the most eloquent and spirited, is also perhaps the most generally known of all Burke's writings. The following passage from another Letter, written in 1795 (the year before), to William Elliot, Esq., on a speech made in the House of Lords by the Duke of Norfolk, will probably be less familiar to many of our readers:—

I wish to warn the people against the greatest of all evils—a blind and furious spirit of innovation, under the name of reform. I was indeed well aware that power rarely reforms itself. So it is undoubtedly when all is quiet about it. But I was in hopes that provident fear might prevent fruitless penitence. I trusted that danger might produce at least circumspection; I flattered myself, in a moment like this, that nothing would be added to make authority top-heavy; that the very moment of an earthquake would not be the time chosen for adding a story to our houses. I hoped to see the surest of all reforms, perhaps the only sure reform, the ceasing to do ill. In the meantime, I wished to the people the wisdom of knowing how to tolerate a condition which none of their efforts can render much more than tolerable. It was a condition, however, in which every thing was to be found that could enable them to live to nature, and, if so they pleased, to live to virtue and to honour.

I do not repent that I thought better of those to whom I wished well than they will suffer me long to think that they deserved. Far from repenting, I would to God that new faculties had been called up in me, in favour not of this or that man, or this or that system, but of the general vital principle, that whilst in its vigour produced the state of things trans-

mitted to us from our fathers; but which, through the joint operations of the abuses of authority and liberty, may perish in our hands. I am not of opinion that the race of men, and the commonwealths they create, like the bodies of individuals, grow effete, and languid, and bloodless, and ossify, by the necessities of their own conformation and the fatal operation of longevity and time. These analogies between bodies natural and politic, though they may sometimes illustrate arguments, furnish no argument of themselves. They are but too often used, under the colour of a specious philosophy, to find apologies for the despair of laziness and pusillanimity, and to excuse the want of all manly efforts when the exigencies of our country call for them most loudly.

How often has public calamity been arrested on the very brink of ruin by the seasonable energy of a single man! Have we no such man amongst us? I am as sure as I am of my being that one vigorous mind, without office, without situation, without public functions of any kind (at a time when the want of such a thing is felt, as I am sure it is), I say, one such man, confiding in the aid of God, and full of just reliance in his own fortitude, vigour, enterprise, and perseverance, would first draw to him some few like himself, and then that multitudes, hardly thought to be in existence, would appear, and troop about him.

If I saw this auspicious beginning, baffled and frustrated as I am, yet, on the very verge of a timely grave, abandoned abroad and desolate at home, stripped of my boast, my hope, my consolation, my helper, my counsellor, and my guide (you know in part what I have lost, and would to God I could clear myself of all neglect and fault in that loss), yet thus, even thus, I would rake up the fire under all the ashes that oppress it. I am no longer patient of the public eye; nor am I of force to win my way, and to justle and elbow in a crowd. But, even in solitude, something may be done for society. The meditations of the closet have affected senates with a subtle frenzy, and inflamed armies with the brands of the furies. The cure might come from the same source with the distemper. I would add my part to those who would animate the people (whose hearts are yet right) to new exertions in the old cause.

Novelty is not the only source of zeal. Why should not a Maccabeus and his brethren arise to assert the honour of the ancient laws, and to defend the temple of their forefathers, with as ardent a spirit as can inspire any innovator to destroy the monuments of the piety and the glory of ancient ages? It is not a hazarded assertion, it is a great truth, that, when once things are gone out of their ordinary course, it is by acts out of the ordinary course they can alone be re-established. Republican spirit can only be combated by a spirit of the same nature: of the same nature, but informed with another principle, and pointed to another end. I would persuade a resistance both to the corruption and to the reformation that prevails. It will not be the weaker, but much the stronger, for combating both together. A victory over real corruptions would enable us to baffle the spurious and pretended reformations. I would not wish to excite, or even to tolerate, that kind of evil which invokes the powers of hell to rectify

the disorders of the earth. No! I would add my voice, with better, and, I trust, more potent charms, to draw down justice, and wisdom, and fortitude from heaven, for the correction of human vice, and the recalling of human error from the devious ways into which it has been betrayed. I would wish to call the impulses of individuals at once to the aid and to the control of authority. By this, which I call the true republican spirit, paradoxical as it may appear, monarchies alone can be rescued from the imbecility of courts and the madness of the crowd. This republican spirit would not suffer men in high place to bring ruin on their country and on themselves. It would reform, not by destroying, but by saving the great, the rich, and the powerful. Such a republican spirit we, perhaps fondly, conceive to have animated the distinguished heroes and patriots of old, who knew no mode of policy but religion and virtue. These they would have paramount to all constitutions; they would not suffer monarchs, or senates, or popular assemblies, under pretences of dignity, or authority, or freedom, to shake off those moral riders which reason has appointed to govern every sort of rude power. These, in appearance loading them by their weight, do by that pressure augment their essential force. The momentum is increased by the extraneous weight. It is true in moral, as it is in mechanical science. It is true, not only in the draught but in the race. These riders of the great, in effect, hold the reins which guide them in their course, and wear the spur that stimulates them to the goals of honour and of safety. The great must submit to the dominion of prudence and of virtue, or none will long submit to the dominion of the great.

From the second of the Letters on a Regicide Peace, or to transcribe the full title, Letters addressed to a Member of the present Parliament on the Proposals for Peace with the Regicide Directory of France,* published in 1796, we give as our last extract the following remarkable observations on the conduct of the war:—

It is a dreadful truth, but it is a truth that cannot be concealed; in ability, in dexterity, in the distinctness of their views, the Jacobins are our superiors. They saw the thing right from the very beginning. Whatever were the first motives to the war among politicians, they saw that in its spirit, and for its objects, it was a *civil war;* and as such they pursued it. It is a war between the partisans of the ancient, civil, moral, and political order of Europe, against a sect of fanatical and ambitious atheists, which means to change them all. It is not France extending a foreign empire over other nations; it is a sect aiming at universal empire, and beginning

* There are four Letters in all; of which the two first appeared in 1796 (a surreptitious edition being also brought out at the same time by Owen, a bookseller of Piccadilly), the third was passing through the press when Burke died, in July, 1797, and the fourth, which is unfinished, and had been written, so far as it goes, before the three others, after his death.

with the conquest of France. The leaders of that sect secured the *centre of Europe;* and, that assured, they knew that, whatever might be the event of battles and sieges, their *cause* was victorious. Whether its territory had a little more or a little less peeled from its surface, or whether an island or two was detached from its commerce, to them was of little moment. The conquest of France was a glorious acquisition. That once well laid as a basis of empire, opportunities never could be wanting to regain or to replace what had been lost, and dreadfully to avenge themselves on the faction of their adversaries.

They saw it was a *civil war*. It was their business to persuade their adversaries that it ought to be a *foreign* war. The Jacobins everywhere set up a cry against the new crusade; and they intrigued with effect in the cabinet, in the field, and in every private society in Europe. Their task was not difficult. The condition of princes, and sometimes of first ministers too, is to be pitied. The creatures of the desk, and the creatures of favour, had no relish for the principles of the manifestoes.[1] They promised no governments, no regiments, no revenues from whence emoluments might arise by perquisite or by grant. In truth, the tribe of vulgar politicians are the lowest of our species. There is no trade so vile and mechanical as government in their hands. Virtue is not their habit. They are out of themselves in any course of conduct recommended only by conscience and glory. A large, liberal, and prospective view of the interests of states passes with them for romance; and the principles that recommend it for the wanderings of a disordered imagination. The calculators compute them out of their senses. The jesters and buffoons shame them out of everything grand and elevated. Littleness in object and in means to them appears soundness and sobriety. They think there is nothing worth pursuit but that which they can handle—which they can measure with a two-foot rule—which they can tell upon ten fingers.

Without the principles of the Jacobins, perhaps without any principles at all, they played the game of that faction. . . . . They aimed, or pretended to aim, at *defending* themselves against a danger from which there can be no security in any *defensive* plan. . . . . This error obliged them, even in their offensive operations, to adopt a plan of war, against the success of which there was something little short of mathematical demonstration. They refused to take any step which might strike at the heart of affairs. They seemed unwilling to wound the enemy in any vital part. They acted through the whole as if they really wished the conservation of the Jacobin power, as what might be more favourable than the lawful government to the attainment of the petty objects they looked for. They always kept on the circumference; and, the wider and remoter the circle was, the more eagerly they chose it as their sphere of action in this centrifugal war. The plan they pursued in its nature demanded great length of time. In its execution, they who went the nearest way to work were obliged to cover

[1] Of the Emperor and the King of Prussia, published in August, 1792.

an incredible extent of country. It left to the enemy every means of destroying this extended line of weakness. Ill success in any part was sure to defeat the effect of the whole. This is true of Austria. It is still more true of England. On this false plan even good fortune, by further weakening the victor, put him but the further off from his object.

As long as there was any appearance of success, the spirit of aggrandizement, and consequently the spirit of mutual jealousy, seized upon all the coalesced powers. Some sought an accession of territory at the expense of France, some at the expense of each other, some at the expense of third parties; and, when the vicissitude of disaster took its turn, they found common distress a treacherous bond of faith and friendship.

The greatest skill, conducting the greatest military apparatus, has been employed; but it has been worse than uselessly employed, through the false policy of the war. The operations of the field suffered by the errors of the cabinet. If the same spirit continues when peace is made, the peace will fix and perpetuate all the errors of the war. . . . .

Had we carried on the war on the side of France which looks towards the Channel or the Atlantic, we should have attacked our enemy on his weak or unarmed side. We should not have to reckon on the loss of a man who did not fall in battle. We should have an ally in the heart of the country, who, to one hundred thousand, would at one time have added eighty thousand men at the least, and all animated by principle, by enthusiasm, and by vengeance; motives which secured them to the cause in a very different manner from some of those allies whom we subsidized with millions. This ally (or rather this principal in the war), by the confession of the regicide himself, was more formidable to him than all his other foes united. Warring there, we should have led our arms to the capital of wrong. Defeated, we could not fail (proper precautions taken) of a sure retreat. Stationary, and only supporting the royalists, an impenetrable barrier, an impregnable rampart, would have been formed between the enemy and his naval power. We are probably the only nation who have declined to act against an enemy, when it might have been done, in his own country; and who, having an armed, a powerful, and a long victorious ally in that country, declined all effectual co-operation, and suffered him to perish for want of support. On the plan of a war in France, every advantage that our allies might obtain would be doubtful in its effect. Disasters on the one side might have a fair chance of being compensated by victories on the other. Had we brought the main of our force to bear upon that quarter, all the operations of the British and imperial crowns would have been combined. The war would have had system, correspondence, and a certain connection. But, as the war has been pursued, the operations of the two crowns have not the smallest degree of mutual bearing or relation.[1]

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[1] These prophetic views are very similar to those that were urged twelve years later in a memorable article in the Edinburgh Review, known to be by a great living orator. (See No. XXV., Don Cevallos on the French Usurpation of Spain.)

Metaphysical and Ethical Writers.

The most remarkable metaphysical and speculative works which had appeared in England since Locke's Essay were, Dr. Samuel Clarke's Sermons on the Evidences of Natural and Revealed Religion, 1705, in which he expounded his famous *à priori* argument for the existence of a God; Berkeley's Theory of Vision, 1709; his Principles of Human Knowledge, 1710, in which he announced his argument against the existence of matter; his Dialogue between Hylas and Philonous, 1713; his Alciphron, or the Minute Philosopher, 1732; his Analyst, 1734; the Earl of Shaftesbury's Characteristics of Men, Manners, Opinions, and Times, first published in the form in which we now have them in 1713, after the author's death; Mandeville's Fable of the Bees, or Private Vices Public Benefits, 1714; Dr. Francis Hutcheson's Inquiry into the Ideas of Beauty and Virtue, 1725; Andrew Baxter's Inquiry into the Nature of the Human Soul, 1730; Bishop Butler's Sermons preached at the Rolls Chapel, 1726; and his Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature, 1736. David Hume, who was born in 1711, and died in 1776, and who has gained the highest place in two very distinct fields of intellectual and literary enterprise, commenced his literary life by the publication of his Treatise on Human Nature, in 1739. The work, which, as he has himself stated, was projected before he left college, and written and published not long after, fell, to use his own words, "dead-born from the press;" nor did the speculations it contained attract much more attention when republished ten years after in another form under the title of Philosophical Essays concerning Human Understanding; but they eventually proved perhaps more exciting and productive, at least for a time, both in this and in other countries, than any other metaphysical views that had been promulgated in modern times. Hume's Inquiry concerning the Principles of Morals appeared in 1752, his Natural History of Religion in 1755; and with the latter publication he may be regarded as having concluded the exposition of his sceptical philosophy. Among the most distinguished writers on mind and morals that appeared after Hume within the first quarter of a century of the reign of George III. may be mentioned Hartley, whose Observations on Man, in which he

unfolded his hypothesis of the association of ideas, were published in 1749; Lord Kames (Henry Home), whose Essays on the Principles of Morality and Natural Religion were published in 1752; Adam Smith, whose Theory of Moral Sentiments was published in 1759; Reid, whose Inquiry into the Human Mind on the Principles of Common Sense was published in 1764; Abraham Tucker (calling himself Edward Search, Esq.), the first part of whose Light of Nature Pursued was published in 1768, the second in 1778, after the author's death; and Priestley, whose new edition of Hartley's work, with an Introductory Dissertation, was published in 1775; his Examination of Dr. Reid's Inquiry, the same year; and his Doctrine of Philosophical Necessity, in 1777. We may add to the list Campbell's very able Dissertation on Miracles, in answer to Hume, which appeared in 1763; and Beattie's Essay on Truth, noticed in a former page, which appeared in 1770, and was also, as everybody knows, an attack upon the philosophy of the great sceptic.

Historical Writers:—*Hume*; Robertson; Gibbon.

In the latter part of his literary career Hume struck into altogether another line, and the subtle and daring metaphysician suddenly came before the world in the new character of an historian. He appears, indeed, to have nearly abandoned metaphysics very soon after the publication of his Philosophical Essays. In a letter to his friend Sir Gilbert Elliott, which, though without date, seems from its contents, according to Mr. Stewart, to have been written about 1750 or 1751, he says, "I am sorry that our correspondence should lead us into these abstract speculations. I have thought, and read, and composed very little on such questions of late. Morals, politics, and literature have employed all my time." * The first volume of his History of Great Britain, containing the Reigns of James I.

* Dissertation on the Progress of Metaphysical, Ethical, and Political Philosophy, prefixed to Encyclopædia Britannica, p. 206, *note* 3. But we do not understand how Mr. Stewart infers from this letter that Hume had abandoned all his metaphysical researches *long before* the publication of his Essays. His Philosophical Essays concerning Human Understanding, which are those of which Mr. Stewart is speaking, were first published in 1749.

and Charles I., was published, in quarto, at Edinburgh, in 1754; the second, containing the Commonwealth and the Reigns of Charles II. and James II., at London, in 1757.* According to his own account the former was received with "one cry of reproach, disapprobation, and even detestation;" and after the first ebullitions of the fury of his assailants were over, he adds, "what was still more mortifying, the book seemed to sink into oblivion: Mr. Miller told me that in a twelvemonth he sold only forty-five copies of it." He was so bitterly disappointed, that, he tells us, had not the war been at that time breaking out between France and England, he had certainly retired to some provincial town of the former kingdom, changed his name, and never more returned to his native country. However, after a little time, in the impracticability of executing this scheme of expatriation, he resolved to pick up courage and persevere, the more especially as his second volume was considerably advanced. That, he informs us, "happened to give less displeasure to the Whigs, and was better received: it not only rose itself, but helped to buoy up its unfortunate brother." The work, indeed, seems to have now rapidly attained extraordinary popularity. Two more volumes, comprehending the reigns of the princes of the House of Tudor, appeared in 1759; and the remaining two, completing the History, from the Invasion of Julius Cæsar to the accession of Henry VII., in 1762. And several new editions of all the volumes were called for in rapid succession.† Hume

* The common accounts say 1756; but the copy before us, "printed for A. Millar, opposite Catharine Street, in the Strand," is dated 1757.

† In a newspaper of 1764 (The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser, for Wednesday, May 9), we find, besides the advertisement of a new edition of the History of the House of Tudor, in 2 vols. small paper, 4to., price 1*l.* 5*s.*, the following announcement, which is curious both as an evidence of the popularity of Hume's work, and as showing that a mode of publication extensively adopted in our own day is no novelty:—"This day is published, printed on a new type and good paper, the seventh volume, in octavo, price 5*s.* in boards, of the Complete History of England, from Julius Cæsar to the Revolution. With Additions and Corrections. And to the last volume will be added a full and complete Index. By DAVID HUME, Esq. *** The Proprietor, at the desire of many who wish to be possessed of this valuable and esteemed History, is induced to this Monthly Publication, which will not exceed Eight volumes; a volume of which shall be punctually published every Month, for the benefit of those who do not choose to purchase them all at once. Printed for A. Millar, in the Strand; and S. Bladon, in Paternoster Row; and to be had of all the Booksellers of Great Britain and Ireland."

makes as much an epoch in our historical as he does in our philosophical literature. His originality in the one department is as great as in the other; and the influence he has exerted upon those who have followed him in the same path has been equally extensive and powerful in both cases. His History, notwithstanding some defects which the progress of time and of knowledge is every year making more considerable, or at least enabling us better to perceive, and some others which probably would have been much the same at whatever time the work had been written, has still merits of so high a kind as a literary performance that it must ever retain its place among our few classical works in this department, of which it is as yet perhaps the greatest. In narrative clearness, grace, and spirit, at least, it is not excelled, scarcely equalled, by any other completed historical work in the language; and it has besides the high charm, indispensable to every literary performance that is to endure, of being impressed all over with the peculiar character of the author's own mind, interesting us even in its most prejudiced and objectionable passages (perhaps still more, indeed, in some of these than elsewhere) by his tolerant candour and gentleness of nature, his charity for all the milder vices, his unaffected indifference to many of the common objects of human passion, and his contempt for their pursuers, never waxing bitter or morose, and often impregnating his style and manner with a vein of the quietest but yet truest and richest humour. One effect which we may probably ascribe in great part to the example of Hume was the attention that immediately began to be turned to historic composition in a higher spirit than had heretofore been felt among us, and that ere long added to the possessions of the language in that department the celebrated performances of Robertson and Gibbon. Robertson's History of Scotland during the Reigns of Queen Mary and of King James VI. was published at London in 1759; his History of the Reign of the Emperor Charles V., in 1769; and his History of America, in 1776. Robertson's style of narration, lucid, equable, and soberly embellished, took the popular ear and taste from the first. A part of the cause of this favourable reception is slily enough indicated by Hume, in a letter which he wrote to Robertson himself on the publication of the History of Scotland:—"The great success of your book, besides its real merit, is forwarded by its prudence, and by the deference paid to established opinions. It gains also

by its being your first performance, and by its surprising the public, who are not upon their guard against it. By reason of these two circumstances justice is more readily done to its merit, which, however, is really so great, that I believe there is scarce another instance of a first performance being so near perfection."* The applause, indeed, was loud and universal, from Horace Walpole to Lord Lyttelton, from Lord Mansfield to David Garrick.† Nor did it fail to be renewed in equal measure on the appearance both of his History of Charles V. and of his History of America. But, although in his own day he probably bore away the palm from Hume in the estimation of the majority, the finest judgments even then discerned, with Gibbon, that there was something higher in "the careless inimitable graces" of the latter than in his rival's more elaborate regularity, flowing and perspicuous as it usually is; and, as always happens, time has brought the general opinion into accordance with this feeling of the wiser few. The first volume of Gibbon's History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire appeared in 1776, a few months before the death of Hume, and about a year before the publication of Robertson's America; the second and third followed in 1781; the three additional volumes, which completed the work, not till 1788. Of the first volume, the author tells us, "the first impression was exhausted in a few days; a second and third edition were scarcely adequate to the demand; and a scarcely diminished interest followed the great undertaking to its close, notwithstanding the fear which he expresses in the preface to his concluding volumes that "six ample quartos must have tried, and may have exhausted, the indulgence of the public." A performance at once of such extent, and of so sustained a brilliancy throughout, perhaps does not exist in ancient or modern historical literature; but it is a hard metallic brilliancy, which even the extraordinary interest of the subject and the unflagging animation of the writer, with the great skill he shows in the disposition of his materials, do not prevent from becoming sometimes fatiguing and oppressive. Still the splendour, artificial as it is, is very imposing; it does not warm, as well as illuminate, like the light of the sun, but it has at least the effect of a

* Account of the Life and Writings of Robertson, by Dugald Stewart.

† "Lord Lyttelton," says Hume, in another letter, "seems to think that since the time of St. Paul there scarce has been a better writer than Dr. Robertson."

theatrical blaze of lamps and cressets; while it is supported everywhere by a profusion of real erudition such as would make the dullest style and manner interesting. It is remarkable, however, that, in regard to mere language, no one of these three celebrated historical writers, the most eminent we have yet to boast of, at least among those that have stood the test of time, can be recommended as a model. No one of the three, in fact, was of English birth and education. Gibbon's style is very impure, abounding in Gallicisms; Hume's, especially in the first edition of his History, is, with all its natural elegance, almost as much infested with Scotticisms; and, if Robertson's be less incorrect in that respect, it is so unidiomatic as to furnish a still less adequate exemplification of genuine English eloquence. Robertson died at the age of seventy-one, in 1793; Gibbon, in 1794, at the age of fifty-seven.

Many other historical works, some of them very ably executed, and forming valuable additions to our literature, also appeared about this date, the most remarkable of which are, Lord Lyttelton's History of the Life of King Henry II. (1764–7), a prolix and ill-arranged but elaborate and sensible performance, founded throughout on original authorities, and, from the detailed and painstaking investigations it contains of many fundamental points, still forming perhaps the best introduction we possess to the study of the English constitution; Sir David Dalrymple Lord Hailes's admirable Annals of Scotland from the accession of Malcolm Canmore to the accession of the House of Stuart (1776–9); Sir John Dalrymple's Memoirs of Great Britain and Ireland from the Dissolution of the last Parliament of Charles II. until the sea-battle off La Hogue (1771–3), to which a third volume was afterwards added carrying down the narrative to the capture of the French and Spanish fleets at Vigo, a publication the importance of which consists in the original papers it contains, procured from the French Foreign Office and from King William's private cabinet at Kensington; James Macpherson's History of Great Britain from the Restoration to the Accession of the House of Hanover, with Original Papers (1775); Gilbert Stuart's Historical Dissertation concerning the Antiquity of the British Constitution (1767); his View of Society in Europe in its Progress from Rudeness to Refinement; or, Inquiries concerning the History of Laws, Government, and Manners (1777); his History of the Establishment of the Refor-

mation of Religion in Scotland (1580): and his History of Scotland from the Establishment of the Reformation till the death of Queen Mary (1582): all displaying both research and acuteness, but the two last mentioned deformed by the author's violent personal animosity against Robertson, for the purpose of confuting certain of whose statements or views they were mainly written; Whitaker's History of Manchester (1771-5), which is in truth a general investigation of the Celtic and Roman antiquities of Britain, conducted, however, with more learning and ingenuity than sound judgment; Warner's History of Ireland (1763-7); Leland's History of Ireland from the Invasion of Henry II. (1773), a well-written general sketch, by the translator of Demosthenes and Æschines, and the author of The Life of Philip of Macedon, published in 1758: Henry's History of Great Britain, from the Invasion of Julius Cæsar to the Death of Henry VIII. (1771-74-77-81-85, a sixth volume having been published in 1793, after the author's death, under the superintendence of Malcolm Laing, Esq.), a work valuable for the numerous facts it contains illustrative of manners and the state of society, which are not to be found in any of our previous general historians, but chiefly meritorious as having been our first English history compiled upon that plan; Granger's curious Biographical History of England (1769-75); Dr. Adam Ferguson's Essay on the History of Civil Society (1767), and his History of the Progress and the Termination of the Roman Republic (1783), both very able works, the product of independent thought as well as of accurate scholarship; Watson's History of Philip II. of Spain (1776), designed as a sequel to Robertson's Charles V., the continuation of which to the death of Philip III., begun by Watson, was completed and published in 1783, after his death, by Dr. William Thomson; Orme's accurate and perspicuous History of the Military Transactions of the British Nation in Indostan from the year 1745 (1763-78); Holwell's Interesting Historical Events relative to the Provinces of Bengal, and the Empire of Hindostan (1765-67-71); Anderson's Historical and Chronological Deduction of the Origin of Commerce (1764); Tytler Lord Woodhouselee's Plan and Outlines of a Course of Lectures on Universal History (1783). To these titles may be added that of Home Lord Kames's Sketches of the History of Man (1773), which, however, although it presents a highly curious collection of

arranged facts, or what the author believed to be such, is in the main rather disquisitional and theoretic than historical in the proper sense.

Political Economy; Theology; Criticism and Belles Lettres.

Besides his metaphysical and historical works, upon which his fame principally rests, the penetrating and original genius of Hume also distinguished itself in another field, that of economical speculation, which had for more than a century before his time to some extent engaged the attention of inquirers in this country. There are many ingenious views upon this subject scattered up and down in his Political Discourses, and his Moral and Political Essays. Other contributions, not without value, to the science of political economy, for which we are indebted to the middle of the last century, are the Rev. R. Wallace's Essay on the Numbers of Mankind, published at Edinburgh in 1753: and Sir James Steuart's Inquiry into the Principles of Political Economy, which appeared in 1767. But these and all other preceding works on the subject have been thrown into the shade by Adam Smith's celebrated Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations, which, after having been long expected, was at last given to the world in the beginning of the year 1776. It is interesting to learn that this crowning performance of his friend was read by Hume, who died before the close of the year in which it was published; a letter of his to Smith is preserved, in which, after congratulating him warmly on having acquitted himself so as to relieve the anxiety and fulfil the hopes of his friends, he ends by saying, "If you were here at my fireside, I should dispute some of your principles. . . . But these, and a hundred other points, are fit only to be discussed in conversation. I hope it will be soon, for I am in a very bad state of health, and cannot afford a long delay." Smith survived till July, 1790.

A few other names, more or less distinguished in the literature of this time, we must content ourselves with merely mentioning:—in theology, Warburton, Lowth, Horsley, Jortin, Madan, Gerard, Blair, Geddes, Lardner, Priestley; in critical and grammatical disquisition, Harris, Monboddo, Kames, Blair, Jones; in antiquarian research, Walpole, Hawkins, Burney,

Chandler, Barrington, Steevens, Pegge, Farmer, Vallancey, Grose, Gough; in the department of the belles lettres and miscellaneous speculation, Chesterfield, Hawkesworth, Brown, Jenyns, Bryant, Hurd, Melmoth, Potter, Francklin, &c.

PROGRESS OF SCIENCE.

The last notices given under that head brought down our sketch of the progress of the mathematical and physical sciences to the death of Flamsteed in 1719. The successor of Flamsteed, as astronomer royal, was Edmund Halley, who was then in his sixty-fourth year, and who held the appointment till his death in 1742, at the age of eighty-six. "Among the Englishmen of his day," says the writer of his life in the Penny Cyclopædia, "Halley stands second only to Newton, and probably for many years after the publication of the Principia he was the only one who both could and would rightly appreciate the character and coming utility of that memorable work. His own attention was too much divided to permit of his being the mathematician which he might have been; but nevertheless his papers on pure mathematics show a genius of the same order of power, though of much less fertility, with that of John Bernouilli."* Besides numerous papers in the Philosophical Transactions, Halley is the author of a Catalogue of the Southern Stars (Catalogus Stellarum Australium, sive Supplementum Catalogi Tychonici), published in 1679, being the result of his observations made at St. Helena, where he had resided the two preceding years; and of editions of the treatise of Apollonius De Rationis Sectione (from the Arabic), and of the same ancient geometrician's Conic Sections (partly from the Arabic), the former of which was published at Oxford in 1706, the latter in 1710. Halley did not himself understand Arabic, but he was able both to restore what was lost in these works and in many cases to suggest the true meaning and emendation of the text where it was corrupted, merely by his geometrical ingenuity and profound knowledge of their subjects. Besides other astronomical labours, Halley is famous for having been the first person to predict the return of a comet, that known by his name, which he first saw at Paris in

* Penny Cyclopædia, xii. 21.

December 1680, and which actually reappeared, as he had calculated that it would, in 1758 and 1835. He also suggested the observation of the transit of Venus, with the view of determining the sun's parallax, which was accomplished at St. Helena, by Dr. Maskelyne, in 1761. Out of the province of astronomy he contributed to the progress of science by his construction of the first tables of mortality (from observations made at Breslau), by his improvements in the diving-bell, and by his speculations on the variation of the compass, the theory of the trade winds, and other subjects.

The third astronomer royal was James Bradley—"the first, perhaps, of all astronomers," as he is called by the writer of his life in the Penny Cyclopædia, "in the union of theoretical sagacity with practical excellence." Bradley, who was born in 1693, had already in 1728 made his great discovery of the aberration of light, or the apparent alteration in the place of a star arising in part from the motion of light, in part from the change of position in the spectator occasioned by the motion of the earth; "the greatest discovery," says the writer just quoted, "of a man who has, more than any other, contributed to render *a single observation* of a star correct enough for the purposes of astronomy," and "the first positively direct and unanswerable proof of the earth's motion."* Bradley, whom Newton had declared the best astronomer in Europe, held the office of astronomer royal from 1742 till his death in 1762. Besides an immense mass of observations of unprecedented accuracy (which have been published by the University of Oxford in two volumes, 1798–1805), he made in 1747 his second great discovery of the nutation of the earth's axis, that is, of the fact that the curve in which the pole of the equator moves round the pole of the ecliptic is not that of a plain but of a waving or tremulous circle, somewhat like the rim of a milled coin. One of the subjects that occupied the attention of this distinguished astronomer was the introduction of the new style, which was effected by act of parliament in 1751. "Bradley," says his biographer in the Penny Cyclopædia, "appears to have had some share in drawing up the necessary tables, as well as in aiding Lord Macclesfield, his early friend, and the seconder of the measure in the House of Lords, and Mr. Pelham, then minister, with his advice on the subject.

* Penny Cyclopædia, v. 320.

But this procured him some unpopularity, for the common people of all ranks imagined that the alteration was equivalent to robbing them of eleven days of their natural lives, and called Bradley's subsequent illness and decline a judgment of heaven." "This," adds the learned writer, "was, as far as we know, the last expiring manifestation of a belief in the wickedness of altering the time of religious anniversaries, which had disturbed the world more or less, and at different periods, for fourteen hundred years."* But, if the people believed that the change of style had actually shortened their lives, they had more serious cause for alarm than the zealots of orthodoxy in former times, who made themselves unhappy about the notion of merely celebrating Easter on the wrong day.

In the earlier part of the eighteenth century, we ought not to omit to mention, was invented the ingenious and valuable instrument called Hadley's Quadrant (since improved into a sextant, and still more recently into an entire circle), either by John Hadley, who was a fellow of the Royal Society, and who gave an account of it in the Philosophical Transactions for 1731, or by Thomas Godfrey, a glazier in Philadelphia, who is generally believed to have been in possession of it a year before the date of Hadley's communication. But it appears that a similar instrument had been described to Dr. Halley by Newton, some time before his death in 1727. And this age is also marked in the history of optics and astronomical observation by the important correction of the Newtonian views as to the dispersion of refracted light, of which the honour belongs to John Dollond, and by the invention of the Achromatic Telescope, with which that sagacious and philosophical experimentalist followed up his discovery. Dollond's account of his Experiments concerning the Different Refrangibility of Light appeared in the Philosophical Transactions in 1758; and his achromatic object-glass was contrived the same year.

Of a few other distinguished British mathematicians belonging to the middle portion of the last century the most eminent was Colin Maclaurin, the successor of James Gregory in the mathematical chair at Edinburgh, who was born in 1698, and died in 1746. Maclaurin's principal works are his Geometria Organica (a treatise on curves), published in 1720; his admirable Treatise on Fluxions, 1742; and his Treatise on Algebra, 1748. Another

* Penny Cyclopædia, v. 321.

very able performance printed after his death is his Account of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophical Discoveries, which also appeared at London in 1748. All Maclaurin's works are distinguished by profoundness and solidity united with elegance, and often by originality in the method of exposition, or novelty in the application of principles. His countryman and contemporary, Dr. Robert Simson, professor of mathematics at Glasgow (b. 1687, d. 1768), was also a most learned and able geometrician: he is the author of a restoration of the Loci of Apollonius, and of an English translation of Euclid, which continued down to our own day in common use as an elementary book both in Scotland and England. Along with these may be mentioned James Stirling, the author of a Latin treatise published in 1717, on what are called lines of the third order, and a treatise on fluxions, entitled Methodus Differentialis, 1730. William Emerson, a mathematician and mechanist of great talent, whose death did not take place till 1782, when he had reached his eighty-first year, is the author of a series of works on fluxions, trigonometry, mechanics, navigation, algebra, optics, astronomy, geography, dialing, &c. His manner of writing is singularly uncouth; but his works often exhibit much scientific elegance, as well as considerable invention. Another author of a remarkable series of mathematical works, of this date, is the self-taught genius, Thomas Simpson, who was born at Market Bosworth, in the humblest rank of life, in 1710, worked at his trade of a weaver till he was seven-and-twenty, and then suddenly came forth as one of the most acute and well-furnished mathematical writers of the day. A Treatise on Fluxions, another on the Nature and Laws of Chance, a quarto volume of Essays on subjects in speculative and mixed mathematics, a work on the doctrine of Annuities and Reversion, a second volume of Mathematical Dissertations, a treatise on Algebra, another on Elementary Geometry, another on Trigonometry, plane and spherical, a new work on the doctrine and application of Fluxions, a volume of Exercises for young proficients in Mathematics, and a volume of Miscellaneous Tracts, were all produced by Simpson in the twenty years between 1737 and 1757. And he also furnished several papers to the Philosophical Transactions, and edited for some years the mathematical annual called the Ladies' Diary. He died in 1761. In the same year with Simpson was born in Banffshire, in Scotland, James Ferguson, who was the son of a

day-labourer, and who taught himself the elements of mechanics and astronomy while employed as a farmer's boy in tending sheep. Ferguson published his first performance, his Dissertation on the Phenomena of the Harvest Moon, in 1747; his Astronomy in 1756; his Lectures on Mechanics, Hydrostatics, Pneumatics, and Optics, in 1760; and two or three other works between that date and his death in 1776. "Ferguson," it has been observed, "has contributed more than perhaps any other man in this country to the extension of physical science among all classes of society, but especially among that largest class whose circumstances preclude them from a regular course of scientific instruction. Perspicuity in the selection and arrangement of his facts, and in the display of the truths deduced from them, was his characteristic both as a lecturer and a writer." *

Another department of natural philosophy in which some splendid results were obtained by English experimenters of this era was that of electricity. Francis Hawksbee, who was admitted a fellow of the Royal Society in 1705, published several papers in the Transactions between that year and 1711, giving an account of a series of experiments, partly performed with a glass globe, in the course of which he noticed a number of facts connected with electrical attraction and repulsion, and in particular detected for the first time the remarkable phenomenon of the production of light by friction. A few years later the subject was taken up by Stephen Gray, a pensioner of the Charter House, who, with the aid of a very poor apparatus, made out a catalogue, which he published in 1720, of bodies which show electricity on being rubbed, and in 1732 discovered the conducting property inherent in bodies that are not electrical. The two opposite kinds, or exhibitions, of electricity (which he called the vitreous and the resinous) were discovered by Dufay, keeper of the King's Garden at Paris, before 1739; and he also showed that bodies similarly electrified repel, and those dissimilarly electrified attract, each other. The mode of accumulating the electric power by what is called the Leyden phial, or jar, was discovered by Cuneus and Lallemand in 1745. This experiment immediately attracted universal attention: Nollet in France, and Watson in England, in particular, applied themselves to find out the explanation of it; and the latter is asserted to have first conceived the hypothesis

* Penny Cyclopædia, x. 234.

of the redundancy of the electricity on the one side of the jar and its deficiency on the other. The same view occurred to the celebrated Benjamin Franklin, in America, who expounded it in a series of letters written to his friend Collinson, in London, in the course of the year 1747, in which he described the over-charged side of the jar as in a state of positive, and the under-charged of negative, electricity, and showed how all the known phenomena of electric action were to be accounted for on this hypothesis of only one kind of electric matter, or power, in opposite states. Franklin seems to have known little or nothing of what had been done by his predecessors either in France or England; of the theories, at least, either of Dufay or Watson, he appears never to have heard. Although not the first in the field, his penetrating and inventive genius immediately raised him to the first place among the cultivators of the new science. He soon improved the Leyden jar into the much more powerful apparatus of the electrical battery. Some of his earliest experiments had taught him the superior efficiency of sharp points both in attracting and giving out the electric matter; from the year 1749 he had inferred, from a great number of facts which he had observed and collected, the probable identity of electricity and lightning; and at last, in June, 1752, he established that truth by the decisive experiment of actually drawing down the electric matter from the clouds. This was followed by his invention of lightning-conductors, of which, however, none were erected in England till the year 1762.

The thermometer was invented at Florence soon after the middle of the seventeenth century, and by the assistance of that instrument, as manufactured by Fahrenheit and Réaumur, a considerable number of facts relating to the laws of heat had been gradually collected before the middle of the eighteenth. "The most judicious writer," says Professor Leslie, "that had yet appeared on the subject of heat, was Dr. Martine, of St. Andrew's, who studied medicine on the Continent, and, like the accomplished physicians of that period, cultivated learning and general science. His acute Essays, published in the years 1739 and 1740, not only corrected the different thermometric scales, but enriched philosophy by several well-devised and original experiments. Unfortunately the career of this promising genius was very short. Having in the pursuit of his profession accompanied Admiral Vernon in the fatal expedition against Carthagena, he

perished by a malignant fever."* Mr. Leslie adds, that if Martine's investigations had been steadily prosecuted, they must have led to interesting results. About the year 1750, also, Dr. Cullen had his attention accidentally drawn to some facts connected with the curious subject of the production of cold by evaporation; but he did not pursue the inquiry.

In general chemistry the experiments begun by Boyle and Hooke had been followed up by their contemporary Dr. John Mayow, a physician of Oxford, whose tracts, written in Latin, on nitre and other connected subjects, were published in 1674. They announced many new and important facts illustrative of the phenomena of respiration and combustion. About the beginning of the next century the first general theory of combustion was given to the world by the German chemist Stahl—that which, under the name of the Stahlian or Phlogistic theory (from his imaginary *phlogiston*, or principle of inflammability), continued to be generally received down to the era of Black, Cavendish, and Priestley. Some considerable additions were made to our knowledge of aëriform bodies by Dr. Stephen Hales about a quarter of a century after this. But the most important chemical discoveries of this age are those of the celebrated Dr. Joseph Black, the pupil of Cullen. One was that of the new air discovered by him in the commencement of his career, and announced in his Experiments on Magnesia, Quicklime, and other Alkaline Substances, published in 1755. Fixed air, or, as it is now called, carbonic acid, had indeed been long before recognized as something distinct from common air by Van Helmont; but his notice of it appears to have been quite forgotten when it was again detected by Black, who also first examined it with any degree of care, and ascertained its most remarkable properties. Another was the great discovery of latent heat, which he made a few years later. The most eminent names in the mathematical and physical sciences belonging to the earlier part of the reign of George III. are those of Cavendish (the discoverer of the composition of water), Priestley, Herschel (the discoverer of the planet Uranus), Bliss, who was the fourth, and Maskelyne, who was the fifth astronomer royal, Horsley, Vince, Maseres, Charles Hutton, James Hutton (the author of the Huttonian Theory of the Earth), Cullen, Brown (the propounder of the Brunonian System of Medicine), John and

* Dissertation Fourth, in Encyc. Brit., p. 642.

William Hunter, the anatomists, &c. Under this head may also be noticed the several government voyages of discovery conducted by Commodore Byron, 1764-1766 (in the course of which he discovered the Duke of York's Island and the Isles of Danger); by Captain Wallis, 1766-1768 (in which he discovered the Island of Otaheite); by Captain Carteret, 1766-1769; by Captain Cook, accompanied by Mr. Green, the astronomer, and Dr. Solander and Mr. (afterwards Sir Joseph) Banks, the naturalists, 1668-1771 (in which the transit of Venus over the sun was observed at Otaheite 4th June, 1769, and New South Wales was discovered, and New Zealand re-discovered); by Captain Cook, 1772-1775 (in which he discovered New Caledonia); and by Captain Cook, 1776-1780 (in which the great navigator discovered the Sandwich Islands, and lost his life there, at Owhyhee, on the 14th of February, 1779).

THE LATTER PART OF THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

THE death of Samuel Johnson, in the end of the year 1784, makes a pause, or point of distinction, in our literature, hardly less notable than the acknowledgment of the independence of America, the year before, makes in our political history. It was not only the end of a reign, but the end of kingship altogether, in our literary system. For King Samuel has had no successor; nobody since his day, and that of his contemporary Voltaire, who died in 1778, at the age of eighty-five, has sat on a throne of literature either in England or in France.

Of the literary figures, however, that had previously appeared upon the scene, many continued to be conspicuous for years after this date, some throughout the rest of the century or longer. Burke, the most eminent of them all, survived till 1797; and, having already raised himself to distinction by his publications and speeches in connexion with the American war, won his highest fame in the finishing part of his career by his wonderful oratorical displays on the impeachment of Hastings, and his writings, outblazing everything he had before produced, on the French revolution. Adam Smith did not die till 1790; his countryman, Dr. Robertson, not till 1793; Robertson's illustrious brother historian, Gibbon, not till 1794. Of the poets and cultivators of light literature, or the belles lettres, who have been already mentioned, Thomas Warton lived till 1790, Ossian Macpherson till 1796, Mason and his friend Horace Walpole till 1797, Joseph Warton till 1800. Other writers, again, who have been noticed in preceding pages, outlived Johnson by many years. Thus Beattie only died in 1803; Anstey, the author of the New Bath Guide, in 1805; John Home, the author of Douglas, in 1808; Bishop Percy and Richard Cumberland in 1811;

Adam Ferguson, the historian of the Roman Republic, in 1816; Richard Brinsley Sheridan the same year; Sir Philip Francis, presumed to be Junius, in 1818; Miss Sophia Lee in 1824; Henry Mackenzie in 1831; Miss Burney (afterwards Madame d'Arblay) not till 1840. These writers, and others whose names might be added, had all produced the works by which they were first made known, most of them those to which they chiefly owe their reputation, before the close of the Johnsonian era.

Cowper.

It is a remarkable fact that, if we were to continue our notices of the poets of the last century in strict chronological order, the first name we should have to mention would be that of a writer, who more properly belongs to what may almost be called our own day. Crabbe, whose Tales of the Hall, the most striking production of his powerful and original genius, appeared in 1819, and who died so recently as 1832, published his first poem, The Library, in 1781: some extracts from it are given in the Annual Register for that year. But Crabbe's literary career is divided into two parts by a chasm or interval, during which he published nothing, of nearly twenty years; and his proper era is the present century.

One remark, however, touching this writer may be made here: his first manner was evidently caught from Churchill more than from any other of his predecessors. And this was also the case with his contemporary Cowper, the poetical writer whose name casts the greatest illustration upon the last twenty years of the eighteenth century. William Cowper, born in 1731, twenty-three years before Crabbe,—we pass over his anonymous contributions to his friend the Rev. Mr. Newton's collection of the Olney Hymns, published in 1776,—gave to the world the first volume of his poems, containing those entitled Table-Talk, The Progress of Error, Truth, Expostulation, Hope, Charity, Conversation, and Retirement, in 1782; his famous History of John Gilpin appeared the following year, without his name, in a publication called The Repository; his second volume, containing The Task, Tirocinium, and some shorter pieces, was published in 1785; his translations of the Iliad and the Odyssey

in 1791; and his death took place on the 25th of April, 1800. It is recorded that Cowper's first volume attracted little attention: it certainly appears to have excited no perception in the mind or eye of the public of that day that a new and great light had arisen in the poetical firmament. The Annual Register for 1781, as we have said, gives extracts from Crabbe's Library; a long passage from his next poem, The Village, is given in the volume for 1783; the volume for 1785 in like manner treats its readers to a quotation from The Newspaper, which he had published in that year; but, except that the anonymous History of John Gilpin is extracted in the volume for 1783 from the Repository, we have nothing there of Cowper's till we come to the volume for 1786, which contains two of the minor pieces published in his second volume. Crabbe was probably indebted for the distinction he received in part to his friend and patron Burke, under whose direction the Register was compiled; but the silence observed in regard to Cowper may be taken as not on that account the less conclusive as to the little or next to no impression his first volume made. Yet surely there were both a force and a freshness of manner in the new aspirant that might have been expected to draw some observation. Nor had there of late been such plenty of good poetry produced in England as to make anything of the kind a drug in the market. But here, in fact, lay the main cause of the public inattention. The age was not poetical. The manufacture of verse was carried on, indeed, upon a considerable scale, by the Hayleys and the Whiteheads and the Pratts and others (spinners of sound and weavers of words not for a moment to be compared in inventive and imaginative faculty, or in faculty of any kind, any more than for the utility of their work, with their contemporaries the Arkwrights and Cartwrights); but the production of poetry had gone so much out, that, even in the class most accustomed to judge of these things, few people knew it when they saw it. It has been said that the severe and theological tone of this poetry of Cowper's operated against its immediate popularity; and that was probably the case too; but it could only have been so, at any rate to the same extent, in a time at the least as indifferent to poetry as to religion and morality. For, certainly, since the days of Pope, nothing in the same style had been produced among us to be compared with these poems of Cowper's for animation, vigour, and point, which are among the most admired

qualities of that great writer, any more than for the cordiality, earnestness, and fervour which are more peculiarly their own. Smoother versification we had had in great abundance; more pomp and splendour of rhetorical declamation, perhaps, as in Johnson's paraphrases from Juvenal; more warmth and glow of imagination, as in Goldsmith's two poems, if they are to be considered as coming into the competition. But, on the whole, verse of such bone and muscle had proceeded from no recent writer,—not excepting Churchill, whose poetry had little else than its coarse strength to recommend it, and whose hasty and careless workmanship Cowper, while he had to a certain degree been his imitator, had learned, with his artistical feeling, infinitely to surpass. Churchill's vehement invective, with its exaggerations and personalities, made him the most popular poet of his day: Cowper, neglected at first, has taken his place as one of the classics of the language. Each has had his reward—the reward he best deserved, and probably most desired.

As the death of Samuel Johnson closes one era of our literature, so the appearance of Cowper as a poet opens another. Notwithstanding his obligations both to Churchill and Pope, a main characteristic of Cowper's poetry is its originality. Compared with almost any one of his predecessors, he was what we may call a natural poet. He broke through conventional forms and usages in his mode of writing more daringly than any English poet before him had done, at least since the genius of Pope had bound in its spell the phraseology and rhythm of our poetry. His opinions were not more his own than his manner of expressing them. His principles of diction and versification were announced, in part, in the poem with which he introduced himself to the public, his Table-Talk, in which, having intimated his contempt for the "creamy smoothness" of modern fashionable verse, where sentiment was so often

> sacrificed to sound,
> And truth cut short to make a period round,

he exclaims,

> Give me the line that ploughs its stately course
> Like a proud swan, conquering the stream by force;
> That, like some cottage beauty, strikes the heart,
> Quite unindebted to the tricks of art.

But, although he despised the "tricks" of art, Cowper, like

every great poet, was also a great artist; and, with all its in that day almost unexampled simplicity and naturalness, his style is the very reverse of a slovenly or irregular one. If his verse be not so highly polished as that of Pope,—who, he complains, has

> Made poetry a mere mechanic art,
> And every warbler has his tune by heart,—

it is in its own way nearly as "well disciplined, complete, compact," as he has described Pope's to be. With all his avowed admiration of Churchill, he was far from being what he has called that writer—

> Too proud for art, and trusting in mere force.

On the contrary, he has in more than one passage descanted on "the pangs of a poetic birth"—on

> the shifts and turns,
> The expedients and inventions multiform,
> To which the mind resorts, in chase of terms,
> Though apt, yet coy, and difficult to win;—

and the other labours to be undergone by whoever would attain to excellence in the work of composition. Not, however, that, with all this elaboration, he was a slow writer. Slowness is the consequence of indifference, of a writer not being excited by his subject—not having his heart in his work, but going through it as a mere task; let him be thoroughly in earnest, fully possessed of his subject and possessed by it, and, though the pains he takes to find apt and effective expression for his thoughts may tax his whole energies like wrestling with a strong man, he will not write slowly. He is in a state of active combustion—consuming away, it may be, but never pausing. Cowper is said to have composed the six thousand verses, or thereby, contained in his first volume, in about three months.

Not creative imagination, nor deep melody, nor even, in general, much of fancy or grace or tenderness, is to be met with in the poetry of Cowper; but yet it is not without both high and various excellence. Its main charm, and that which is never wanting, is its earnestness. This is a quality which gives it a power over many minds not at all alive to the poetical; but it is also the source of some of its strongest attractions for those that are. Hence its truth both of landscape-painting, and of the

description of character and states of mind; hence its skilful expression of such emotions and passions as it allows itself to deal with; hence the force and fervour of its denunciatory eloquence, giving to some passages as fine an inspiration of the moral sublime as is perhaps anywhere to be found in didactic poetry. Hence, we may say, even the directness, simplicity, and manliness of Cowper's diction—all that is best in the form, as well as in the spirit, of his verse. It was this quality, or temper of mind, in short, that principally made him an original poet; and, if not the founder of a new school, the pioneer of a new era, of English poetry. Instead of repeating the unmeaning conventionalities and faded affectations of his predecessors, it led him to turn to the actual nature within him and around him, and there to learn both the truths he should utter and the words in which he should utter them.

After Cowper had found, or been found out by, his proper audience, the qualities in his poetry that at first had most repelled ordinary readers rather aided its success. In particular, as we have said, its theological tone and spirit made it acceptable in quarters to which poetry of any kind had rarely penetrated, and where it may perhaps be affirmed that it keeps its ground chiefly perforce of this its most prosaic peculiarity; although, at the same time, it is probable that the vigorous verse to which his system of theology and morals has been married by Cowper has not been without effect in diffusing not only a more indulgent toleration but a truer feeling and love for poetry throughout what is called the religious world. Nor is it to be denied that the source of Cowper's own most potent inspiration is his theological creed. The most popular of his poems, and also certainly the most elaborate, is his Task; it abounds in that delineation of domestic and every-day life which interests everybody, in descriptions of incidents and natural appearances with which all are familiar, in the expression of sentiments and convictions to which most hearts readily respond: it is a poem, therefore, in which the greatest number of readers find the greatest number of things to attract and attach them. Besides, both in the form and in the matter, it has less of what is felt to be strange and sometimes repulsive by the generality; the verse flows, for the most part, smoothly enough, if not with much variety of music; the diction is, as usual with Cowper, clear, manly, and expressive, but at the same time, from being

looser and more diffuse, seldomer harsh or difficult than it is in some of his other compositions; above all, the doctrinal strain is pitched upon a lower key, and, without any essential point being given up, both morality and religion certainly assume a countenance and voice considerably less rueful and vindictive. But, although The Task has much occasional elevation and eloquence, and some sunny passages, it perhaps nowhere rises to the passionate force and vehemence to which Cowper had been carried by a more burning zeal in some of his earlier poems. Take, for instance, the following fine burst in that entitled Table-Talk:—

Not only vice disposes and prepares
The mind, that slumbers sweetly in her snares,
To stoop to tyranny's usurped command,
And bend her polished neck beneath his hand
(A dire effect, by one of Nature's laws,
Unchangeably connected with its cause);
But Providence himself will intervene
To throw his dark displeasure o'er the scene.
All are his instruments; each form of war,
What burns at home, or threatens from afar,
Nature in arms, her elements at strife,
The storms that overset the joys of life,
Are but his rods to scourge a guilty land,
And waste it at the bidding of his hand.
He gives the word, and mutiny soon roars
In all her gates, and shakes her distant shores;
The standards of all nations are unfurled;
She has one foe, and that one foe the world:
And, if he doom that people with a frown,
And mark them with a seal of wrath pressed down,
Obduracy takes place; callous and tough
The reprobated race grows judgment-proof;
Earth shakes beneath them, and heaven wars above;
But nothing scares them from the course they love.
To the lascivious pipe, and wanton song,
That charm down fear, they frolic it along,
With mad rapidity and unconcern,
Down to the gulf from which is no return.
They trust in navies, and their navies fail—
God's curse can cast away ten thousand sail!
They trust in armies, and their courage dies;
In wisdom, wealth, in fortune, and in lies;
But all they trust in withers, as it must,
When He commands, in whom they place no trust.

Vengeance at last pours down upon their coast
A long-despised, but now victorious, host;
Tyranny sends the chain, that must abridge
The noble sweep of all their privilege;
Gives liberty the last, the mortal shock;
Slips the slave's collar on, and snaps the lock.

And, even when it expresses itself in quite other forms, and with least of passionate excitement, the fervour which inspires these earlier poems occasionally produces something more brilliant or more graceful than is anywhere to be found in The Task. How skilfully and forcibly executed, for example, is the following moral delineation in that called Truth:—

The path to bliss abounds with many a snare;
Learning is one, and wit, however rare.
The Frenchman first in literary fame—
(Mention him, if you please. Voltaire?—The same)
With spirit, genius, eloquence, supplied,
Lived long, wrote much, laughed heartily, and died.
The Scripture was his jest-book, whence he drew
Bon mots to gall the Christian and the Jew;
An infidel in health; but what when sick?
Oh—then a text would touch him at the quick.
View him at Paris in his last career;
Surrounding throngs the demigod revere;
Exalted on his pedestal of pride,
And fumed with frankincense on every side,
He begs their flattery with his latest breath,
And, smothered in 't at last, is praised to death.
Yon cottager, who weaves at her own door,
Pillow and bobbins all her little store;
Content though mean, and cheerful if not gay,
Shuffling her threads about the livelong day,
Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night
Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light;
She, for her humble sphere by nature fit,
Has little understanding, and no wit,
Receives no praise; but, though her lot be such,
(Toilsome and indigent) she renders much;
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true—
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew;
And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes
Her title to a treasure in the skies.
O happy peasant! O unhappy bard!
His the mere tinsel, hers the rich reward;

He praised perhaps for ages yet to come,
She never heard of half a mile from home;
He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,
She safe in the simplicity of hers.

Still more happily executed, and in a higher style of art, is the following version, so elaborately finished, and yet so severely simple, of the meeting of the two disciples with their divine Master on the road to Emmaus, in the piece entitled Conversation:—

It happened on a solemn eventide,
Soon after He that was our surety died,
Two bosom friends, each pensively inclined,
The scene of all those sorrows left behind,
Sought their own village, busied as they went
In musings worthy of the great event:
They spake of him they loved, of him whose life,
Though blameless, had incurred perpetual strife,
Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts,
A deep memorial graven on their hearts.
The recollection, like a vein of ore,
The farther traced, enriched them still the more;
They thought him, and they justly thought him, one
Sent to do more than he appeared to have done;
To exalt a people, and to place them high
Above all else; and wondered he should die.
Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,
A stranger joined them, courteous as a friend,
And asked them, with a kind, engaging air,
What their affliction was, and begged a share.
Informed, he gathered up the broken thread,
And, truth and wisdom gracing all he said,
Explained, illustrated, and searched so well
The tender theme on which they chose to dwell,
That, reaching home, The night, they said, is near;
We must not now be parted,—sojourn here.
The new acquaintance soon became a guest,
And, made so welcome at their simple feast,
He blessed the bread, but vanished at the word,
And left them both exclaiming, 'Twas the Lord!
Did not our hearts feel all he deigned to say?
Did not they burn within us by the way?

For one thing, Cowper's poetry, not organ-toned, or informed with any very rich or original music, any more than soaringly imaginative or gorgeously decorated, is of a style that requires

the sustaining aid of rhyme: in blank verse it is apt to overflow in pools and shallows. And this is one among other reasons why, after all, some of his short poems, which are nearly all in rhyme, are perhaps what he has done best. His John Gilpin, universally known and universally enjoyed by his countrymen, young and old, educated and uneducated, and perhaps the only English poem of which this can be said, of course at once suggests itself as standing alone in the collection of what he has left us for whimsical conception and vigour of comic humour; but there is a quieter exercise of the same talent, or at least of a kindred sense of the ludicrous and sly power of giving it expression, in others of his shorter pieces. For tenderness and pathos, again, nothing else that he has written, and not much that is elsewhere to be found of the same kind in English poetry, can be compared with his Lines on receiving his Mother's Picture:—

O that those lips had language! Life has passed
With me but roughly since I heard thee last.
Those lips are thine—thy own sweet smile I see,
The same that oft in childhood solaced me:
Voice only fails, else how distinct they say,
"Grieve not, my child, chase all thy fears away!"
The meek intelligence of those clear eyes
(Blest be the art that can immortalize,
The art that baffles Time's gigantic claim
To quench it) here shines on me still the same.
Faithful remembrancer of one so dear,
O welcome guest, though unexpected here!
Who bidd'st me honour with an artless song,
Affectionate, a mother lost so long.
I will obey, not willingly alone,
But gladly, as the precept were her own:
And, while that face renews my filial grief,
Fancy shall weave a charm for my relief,
Shall steep me in Elysian reverie,
A momentary dream that thou art she.
My mother! when I learned that thou wast dead,
Say, wast thou conscious of the tears I shed?
Hovered thy spirit o'er thy sorrowing son,
Wretch even then, life's journey just begun?
Perhaps thou gav'st me, though unfelt, a kiss;
Perhaps a tear, if souls can melt in bliss—
Ah that maternal smile! it answers—Yes.
I heard the bell tolled on thy burial day,
I saw the hearse that bore thee slow away,

And, turning from my nursery window, drew
A long, long sigh, and wept a last adieu!
But was it such?—It was.—Where thou art gone,
Adieus and farewells are a sound unknown:
May I but meet thee on that peaceful shore,
The parting word shall pass my lips no more!
Thy maidens, grieved themselves at my concern,
Oft gave me promise of thy quick return.
What ardently I wished I long believed,
And, disappointed still, was still deceived;
By expectation every day beguiled,
Dupe of to-morrow even from a child,
Thus many a sad to-morrow came and went,
Till, all my stock of infant sorrow spent,
I learned at last submission to my lot,
But, though I less deplored thee, ne'er forgot.
Where once we dwelt our name is heard no more,
Children not thine have trod my nursery floor;
And where the gardener Robin, day by day,
Drew me to school along the public way,
Delighted with my bauble coach, and wrapped
In scarlet mantle warm, and velvet-capped,
'Tis now become a history little known
That once we called the pastoral house our own.
Short-lived possession! but the record fair,
That memory keeps of all thy kindness there,
Still outlives many a storm, that has effaced
A thousand other themes less deeply traced.
Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou might'st know me safe and warmly laid;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionary plum;
The fragrant waters on my cheeks bestowed
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed:
All this, and, more endearing still than all,
Thy constant flow of love, that knew no fall,
Ne'er roughened by those cataracts and breaks,
That humour interposed too often makes;
All this still legible in memory's page,
And still to be so to my latest age,
Adds joy to duty, makes me glad to pay
Such honours to thee as my numbers may;
Perhaps a frail memorial, but sincere,
Not scorned in heaven, though little noticed here.
Could Time, his flight reversed, restore the hours,
When, playing with thy vesture's tissued flowers,
The violet, the pink, and jessamine,
I pricked them into paper with a pin,

(And thou wast happier than myself the while,
Would'st softly speak, and stroke my head, and smile)
Could those few pleasant days again appear,
Might one wish bring them, would I wish them here?
I would not trust my heart;—the dear delight
Seems so to be desired, perhaps I might.—
But no:—what here we call our life is such,
So little to be loved, and thou so much,
That I should ill requite thee to constrain
Thy unbound spirit into bonds again.
Thou, as a gallant bark from Albion's coast
(The storms all weather'd and the ocean crossed)
Shoots into port at some well-havened isle,
Where spices breathe, and brighter seasons smile,
There sits quiescent on the floods, that show
Her beauteous form reflected clear below,
While airs impregnated with incense play
Around her, fanning light her streamers gay;
So thou, with sails how swift! hast reached the shore
"Where tempests never beat, nor billows roar."[1]
And thy loved consort on the dangerous tide
Of life long since has anchored by thy side.
But me, scarce hoping to attain that rest,
Always from port withheld, always distressed—
Me howling blasts drive devious, tempest-tossed,
Sails ripped, seams opening wide, and compass lost;
And day by day some current's thwarting force
Sets me more distant from a prosperous course.
Yet O the thought that thou art safe, and he!
That thought is joy, arrive what may to me.
My boast is not, that I deduce my birth
From loins enthroned, and rulers of the earth;
But higher far my proud pretensions rise—
The son of parents passed into the skies.
And now farewell.—Time unrevoked has run
His wonted course; yet what I wished is done.
By contemplation's help, not sought in vain,
I seem to have lived my childhood o'er again;
To have renewed the joys that once were mine,
Without the sin of violating thine;
And, while the wings of fancy still are free,
And I can view this mimic show of thee,
Time has but half succeeded in his theft—
Thyself removed, thy power to soothe me left.

This is no doubt, as a whole, Cowper's finest poem, at once

[1] Garth.

springing from the deepest and purest fount of passion, and happy in shaping itself into richer and sweeter music than he has reached in any other. It shows what his real originality, and the natural spirit of art that was in him, might have done under a better training and more favourable circumstances of personal situation, or perhaps in another age. Generally, indeed, it may be said of Cowper, that the more he was left to himself, or trusted to his own taste and feelings, in writing, the better he wrote. In so far as regards the form of composition, the principal charm of what he has done best is a natural elegance, which is most perfect in what he has apparently written with the least labour, or at any rate with the least thought of rules or models. His Letters to his friends, not written for publication at all, but thrown off in the carelessness of his hours of leisure and relaxation, have given him as high a place among the prose classics of his country as he holds among our poets. His least successful performances are his translations of the Iliad and Odyssey, throughout which he was straining to imitate a style not only unlike his own, but, unfortunately, quite as unlike that of his original—for these versions of the most natural of all poetry, the Homeric, are, strangely enough, attempted in the manner of the most artificial of all poets, Milton.

Darwin.

Neither, however, did this age of our literature want its artificial poetry. In fact, the expiration or abolition of that manner among us was brought about not more by the example of a fresh and natural style given by Cowper, than by the exhibition of the opposite style, pushed to its extreme, given by his contemporary Darwin. Our great poets of this era cannot be accused of hurrying into print at an immature age. Dr. Erasmus Darwin, born in 1721, after having risen to distinguished reputation as a physician, published the Second Part of his Botanic Garden, under the title of The Loves of the Plants, in 1789: and the First Part, entitled The Economy of Vegetation, two years after. He died in 1802. The Botanic Garden, hard, brilliant, sonorous, may be called a poem cast in metal—a sort of Pandemonium palace of rhyme, not unlike that raised long ago in another region,—

> where pilasters round
> Were set, and Doric pillars, overlaid
> With golden architrave; nor did there want
> Cornice, or frieze, with bossy sculptures graven:
> The roof was fretted gold.

The poem, however, did not rise exactly "like an exhalation." "The verse," writes its author's sprightly biographer, Miss Anna Seward, "corrected, polished, and modulated with the most sedulous attention; the notes involving such great diversity of matter relating to natural history; and the composition going forward in the short recesses of professional attendance, *but chiefly in his chaise, as he travelled from one place to another;* the Botanic Garden could not be the work of one, two, or three years; it was *ten* from its primal lines to its first publication." If this account may be depended on, the Doctor's supplies of inspiration must have been vouchsafed to him at the penurious rate of little more than a line a day. At least, therefore, it cannot be said of him, as it was said of his more fluent predecessor in both gifts of Apollo, Sir Richard Blackmore, that he wrote "to the rumbling of his chariot wheels." The verse, nevertheless, does in another way smack of the travelling-chaise, and of "the short recesses of professional attendance." Nothing is done in passion and power; but all by filing, and scraping, and rubbing, and other painstaking. Every line is as elaborately polished and sharpened as a lancet; and the most effective paragraphs have the air of a lot of those bright little instruments arranged in rows, with their blades out, for sale. You feel as if so thick an array of points and edges demanded careful handling, and that your fingers are scarcely safe in coming near them. Darwin's theory of poetry evidently was, that it was all a mechanical affair—only a higher kind of pin-making. His own poetry, however, with all its defects, is far from being merely mechanical. The Botanic Garden is not a poem which any man of ordinary intelligence could have produced by sheer care and industry, or such faculty of writing as could be acquired by serving an apprenticeship to the trade of poetry. Vicious as it is in manner, it is even there of an imposing and original character; and a true poetic fire lives under all its affectations, and often blazes up through them. There is not much, indeed, of pure soul or high imagination in Darwin; he seldom rises above the visible and material; but he has at least a poet's eye for the perception of

that, and a poet's fancy for its embellishment and exaltation. No writer has surpassed him in the luminous representation of visible objects in verse; his descriptions have the distinctness of drawings by the pencil, with the advantage of conveying, by their harmonious words, many things that no pencil can paint. His images, though they are for the most part tricks of language rather than transformations or new embodiments of impassioned thought, have often at least an Ovidian glitter and prettiness, or are striking from their mere ingenuity and novelty —as, for example, when he addresses the stars as "flowers of the sky," or apostrophizes the glowworm as "Star of the earth, and diamond of the night." These two instances, indeed, thus brought into juxtaposition, may serve to exemplify the principle upon which he constructs such decorations: it is, we see, an economical principle; for, in truth, the one of these figures is little more than the other reversed, or inverted. Still both are happy and effective enough conceits—and one of them is applied and carried out so as to make it more than a mere momentary light flashing from the verse. The passage is not without a tone of grandeur and meditative pathos:

> Roll on, ye stars! exult in youthful prime,
> Mark with bright curves the printless steps of time;
> Near and more near your beamy cars approach,
> And lessening orbs on lessening orbs encroach;—
> Flowers of the Sky! ye too to age must yield,
> Frail as your silken sisters of the field!
> Star after star from heaven's high arch shall rush,
> Suns sink on suns, and systems systems crush,
> Headlong, extinct, to one dark centre fall,
> And death and night and chaos mingle all!
> —Till o'er the wreck, emerging from the storm,
> Immortal Nature lifts her changeful form,
> Mounts from her funeral pyre on wings of flame,
> And soars and shines, another and the same.

There is also a fine moral inspiration, as well as the usual rhetorical brilliancy, in the following lines:—

> Hail, adamantine Steel! magnetic Lord!
> King of the prow, the ploughshare, and the sword!
> True to the pole, by thee the pilot guides
> His steady helm amid the struggling tides,
> Braves with broad sail the immeasurable sea,
> Cleaves the dark air, and asks no star but thee!

Here, to be sure, we have another variation of the same thought

according to which the stars have elsewhere been presented shining on earth as glowworms and blooming in the sky as flowers; and that may be considered to show some poverty of invention in the poet, or an undue partiality for the stars; but this last metaphor, making a star of the mysterious loadstone, in the dark night and on the immeasurable sea—a guiding and, as it were, living, though lustreless star—is more uncommon and surprising, and evinces more imagination, than the other figures. Bursts such as these, however, are of rare occurrence in the poem. Its sounding declamation is for the most part addressed rather to the ear than to either the imagination or the fancy. But the mortal disease inherent in Darwin's poetry is, that it is essentially unspiritual. It has no divine soul: it has not even a heart of humanity beating in it. Its very life is galvanic and artificial. Matter only is what it concerns itself about: not to spiritualize the material, which is the proper business and end of poetry, but to materialize the spiritual, is its constant tendency and effort. It believes only in the world of sense; and even of that it selects for its subject the lowest departments. Not man and his emotions, but animals, vegetables, minerals, mechanical inventions and processes, are what it delights to deal with. But these things are mostly, by doom of nature, incapable of being turned into high poetry. They belong to the domain of the understanding, or the bodily senses and powers, not either to that of the imagination or that of the heart. Dr. Darwin himself probably came to suspect that there were some subjects of which poetry could make nothing, some regions of mental speculation in which she could only make herself ridiculous, when he saw how grotesquely, and at the same time how exactly in many respects, the style and manner of his Loves of the Plants were reflected in the Loves of the Triangles.

Darwin's poetry is now very little read; and a few extracts, therefore, selected with the object of exhibiting both what is best and what is most peculiar and characteristic in his manner, may not be uninteresting. The first we shall give is the description of the approach of the Goddess of Botany (Darwin manufactures most of his own deities), with part of her address to the Fire Nymphs, in the first canto of the Economy of Vegetation:—

> She comes!—the goddess! through the whispering air,
> Bright as the moon, descends her blushing car;

Each circling wheel a wreath of flowers entwines,
And gemmed with flowers the silken harness shines;
The golden bits with flowery studs are decked,
And knots of flowers the crimson reins connect.—
And now on earth the silver axle rings,
And the shell sinks upon its slender springs;
Light from her airy seat the goddess bounds,
And steps celestial press the pansied grounds.
Fair Spring advancing calls her feathered choir,
And tunes to softer notes her laughing lyre;
Bids her gay hours on purple pinions move,
And crowns her zephyrs with the shafts of love.
Pleased Gnomes, ascending from their earthy beds,
Play round her graceful footsteps as she treads;
Gay Sylphs attendant beat the fragrant air
On winnowing wings, and waft her golden hair;
Blue nymphs emerging leave their sparkling streams,
And Fiery Forms alight from orient beams;
Musked in the rose's lap fresh dews they shed,
Or breathe celestial lustres round her head.
First the fine forms her dulcet voice requires,
Which bathe or bask in elemental fires;
From each bright gem of Day's refulgent car,
From the pale sphere of every twinkling star,
From each nice pore of ocean, earth, and air,
With eye of flame the sparkling hosts repair,
Mix their gay hues, in changeful circles play,
Like motes that tenant the meridian ray.—
So the clear lens collects with magic power
The countless glories of the midnight hour;
Stars after stars with quivering lustre fall,
And twinkling glide along the whitened wall.—
Pleased, as they pass, she counts the glittering bands,
And stills their murmur with her waving hands,
Each listening tribe with fond expectance burns,
And now to these, and now to those, she turns.
"Nymphs of primeval fire! your vestal train
Hung with gold tresses o'er the vast inane,
Pierced with your silver shafts the throne of night,
And charmed young Nature's opening eyes with light.
When love divine, with brooding wings unfurled,
Called from the rude abyss the living world.
'Let there be light!' proclaimed the Almighty Lord;
Astonished Chaos heard the potent word;
Through all his realms the kindling ether runs,
And the mass starts into a million suns;
Earths round each sun with quick explosions burst,
And second planets issue from the first;

Bend, as they journey with projectile force,
In bright ellipses their reluctant course;
Orbs wheel in orbs, round centres centres roll,
And form, self-balanced, one revolving whole.
—Onward they move amid their bright abode,
Space without bound, the bosom of their God!
"Ethereal powers! you chase the shooting stars,
Or yoke the vollied lightnings to your cars;
Cling round the aerial bow with prisms bright,
And pleased untwist the seven-fold threads of light;
Eve's silken couch with gorgeous tints adorn,
And fire the arrowy throne of rising morn:
—Or, plumed with flame, in gay battaliens spring,
To brighter regions borne on broader wing;
Where lighter gases, circumfused on high,
Form the vast concave of exterior sky;
With airy lens the scattered rays assault,
And bend the twilight round the dusky vault;
Ride, with broad eye and scintillating hair,
The rapid fireball through the midnight air;
Dart from the north on pale electric streams,
Fringing night's sable robe with transient beams.
—Or rein the planets in their swift careers,
Gilding with borrowed light their twinkling spheres;
Alarm with comet-blaze the sapphire plain,
The wan stars glimmering through its silver train;
Gem the bright zodiac and the glowing pole,
Or give the sun's phlogistic orb to roll."

There is much more in the same strain; indeed, the oration of the goddess runs on to very near the end of the canto, or for above 450 lines more. In its first aspect this singular style of Darwin's is not a little imposing, with its sonorous march and glare of decoration; but its real poverty soon makes itself felt. His far-sought epithets and other novel applications of words are speedily found to be less satisfactory than startling; not unfrequently the effect is something not very far from ludicrous, and at the best the variety proves to be little more than formal, such as might be produced by mere elaboration or trickery. The above passage is rather a favourable specimen: of the peculiar sort of splendour in which Darwin deals, made up in great part of glittering words and other ingenuities of diction, it has as much as perhaps any other passage in the poem; and the subject is not so unfavourable as some others that he takes up to that kind of display, nor has it led him into any of his more

adventurous eccentricities. The conclusion of this address to the Nymphs of Fire is also very high-wrought: —

"With crest of gold should sultry Sirius glare,
And with his kindling tresses scorch the air;
With points of flame the shafts of summer arm,
And burn the beauties he designs to warm;—
—So erst, when Jove his oath extorted mourned,
And clad in glory to the fair returned;
While Loves at forky bolts their torches light,
And resting lightnings gild the car of night;
His blazing form the dazzled maid admired,
Met with fond lips, and in his arms expired;—
—Nymphs! on light pinions lead your bannered hosts
High o'er the cliffs of Orkney's gulfy coasts;
Leave on your left the red volcanic light
Which Hecla lifts amid the dusky night;
Mark on the right the Dofrine's snow-capt brow,
Where whirling Maelstrome roars and foams below;
Watch with unmoving eye where Cepheus bends
His triple crown, his sceptred hand extends;
Where studs Cassiope with stars unknown
Her golden chair, and gems her sapphire zone;
Where with vast convolution Draco holds
The ecliptic axis in his scaly folds,
O'er half the skies his neck enormous rears,
And with immense meanders parts the Bears;
Onward, the kindred Bears with footsteps rude
Dance round the pole, pursuing and pursued.
"There, in her azure coif and starry stole,
Grey Twilight sits, and rules the slumbering pole;
Bends the pale moonbeams round the sparkling coast,
And strews with livid hands eternal frost.
There, Nymphs! alight, array your dazzling powers,
With sudden march alarm the torpid hours;
On icebuilt isles expand a thousand sails,
Hinge the strong helms, and catch the frozen gales.
The winged rocks to feverish climates guide,
Where fainting zephyrs pant upon the tide;
Pass, where to Ceuta Calpe's thunder roars,
And answering echoes shake the kindred shores;
Pass, where with palmy plumes Canary smiles,
And in her silver girdle binds her isles:
Onward, where Niger's dusky Naiad laves
A thousand kingdoms with prolific waves,
Or leads o'er golden sands her threefold train
In steamy channels to the fervid main;
While swarthy nations crowd the sultry coast,
Drink the fresh breeze, and hail the floating frost;

Nymphs! veiled in mist, the melting treasures steer,
And cool with arctic snows the tropic year.
So, from the burning line by monsoons driven,
Clouds sail in squadrons o'er the darkened heaven;
Wild wastes of sand the gelid gales pervade,
And ocean cools beneath the moving shade.
"Should Solstice, stalking through the sickening bowers,
Suck the warm dewdrops, lap the falling showers;
Kneel with parched lip, and, bending from its brink,
From dripping palm the scanty river drink;
Nymphs! o'er the soil ten thousand points erect,
And high in air the electric flame collect.
Soon shall dark mists with self-attraction shroud
The blazing day, and sail in wilds of cloud;
Each silvery flower the streams aërial quaff,
Bow her sweet head, and infant harvest laugh.
"Thus, when Elijah marked from Carmel's brow
In bright expanse the briny flood below;
Rolled his red eyes amid the scorching air,
Smote his firm breast, and breathed his ardent prayer;
High in the midst a massy altar stood,
And slaughtered offerings pressed the piles of wood;
While Israel's chiefs the sacred hill surround,
And famished armies crowd the dusty ground;
While proud Idolatry was leagued with dearth,
And withered Famine swept the desert earth:—
'Oh! mighty Lord! thy wo-worn servant hear,
Who calls thy name in agony of prayer;
Thy fanes dishonoured, and thy prophets slain,
Lo! I alone survive of all thy train!—
Oh! send from heaven thy sacred fire, and pour
O'er the parched land the salutary shower;—
So shall thy priest thy erring flock recall—
And speak in thunder, thou art Lord of all.'
He cried, and, kneeling on the mountain sands,
Stretched high in air his supplicating hands.
Descending flames the dusky shrine illume,
Fire the wet wood, the sacred bull consume;
Winged from the sea, the gathering mists arise,
And floating waters darken all the skies;
The king with shifted reins his chariot bends,
And wide o'er earth the airy flood descends;
With mingling cries dispersing hosts applaud,
And shouting nations own the living God."

A passage from the intermediate part of this address has been made interesting by the progress of discovery since it was written. In a note Darwin expresses his opinion that steam may

probably "in time be applied to the rowing of barges, and the moving of carriages along the road;" and he adds, "As the specific levity of air is too great for the support of great burdens by balloons, there seems no probable method of flying conveniently but by the power of steam, or some other explosive material, which another half century may probably discover." The most recent great achievement of steam-power as commemorated in the lines that follow was its application in the apparatus for coining copper erected by Watt for Mr. Boulton at Soho :—

"Nymphs! you erewhile on simmering cauldrons played,
And called delighted Savery to your aid;
Bade round the youth explosive steam aspire,
In gathering clouds, and winged the wave with fire;
Bade with cold streams the quick expansion stop,
And sunk the immense of vapours to a drop.
Pressed by the ponderous air the piston falls
Resistless, sliding through its iron walls;
Quick moves the balanced beam, of giant birth,
Wields his large limbs, and nodding shakes the earth.
"The giant power from earth's remotest caves
Lifts with strong arm her dark reluctant waves;
Each caverned rock and hidden den explores,
Drags her dark coals, and digs her shining ores.
Next, in close cells of ribbed oak confined,
Gale after gale, he crowds the struggling wind;
The imprisoned storms through brazen nostrils roar,
Fan the white flame, and fuse the sparkling ore.
Here high in air the rising stream he pours
To clay-built cisterns, or to lead-lined towers;
Fresh through a thousand pipes the wave distils,
And thirsty cities drink the exuberant rills.
There the vast millstone, with inebriate whirl,
On trembling floors his forceful fingers twirl,
Whose flinty teeth the golden harvests grind,—
Feast without blood!—and nourish human kind.
"Now his hard hand on Mona's rifled crest,
Bosomed in rock, her azure ores arrest;
With iron lips his rapid rollers seize
The lengthening bars, in thin expansion squeeze;
Descending screws with ponderous flywheels wound
The tawny plates, the new medallions round;
Hard dies of steel the cupreous circles cramp,
And with quick fall his massy hammers stamp.
The harp, the lily, and the lion join,
And George and Britain guard the sterling coin.

"Soon shall thy arm, unconquered Steam! afar
Drag the slow barge, or drive the rapid car;
Or, on wide-waving wings expanded, bear
The flying chariot through the fields of air.
Fair crews triumphant, leaning from above,
Shall wave their fluttering kerchiefs as they move;
Or warrior-bands alarm the gaping crowd,
And armies sink beneath the shadowy cloud.
"So mighty Hercules o'er many a clime
Waved his vast mace in Virtue's cause sublime;
Unmeasured strength with early art combined,
Awed, served, protected, and amazed mankind.
First, two dread snakes, at Juno's vengeful nod,
Climbed round the cradle of the sleeping god;
Waked by the shrilling hiss, and rustling sound,
And shrieks of fair attendants trembling round,
Their gasping throats with clenching hands he holds;
And death entwists their convoluted folds.
Next in red torrents from her seven-fold heads
Fell Hydra's blood on Lerna's lake he sheds;
Grasps Acheloüs with resistless force,
And drags the roaring river to his course;
Binds with loud bellowing and with hideous yell
The monster bull, and three-fold god of hell.
Then, where Nemea's howling forests wave,
He drives the lion to his dusky cave;
Seized by the throat the growling fiend disarms,
And tears his gaping jaws with sinewy arms;
Lifts proud Antæus from his mother-plains,
And with strong grasp the struggling giant strains;
Back falls his fainting head, and clammy hair,
Writhe his weak limbs, and flits his life in air.
By steps reverted o'er the blood-dropped fen
He tracks huge Cacus to his murderous den;
Where, breathing flames through brazen lips, he fled,
And shakes the rock-roofed cavern o'er his head.
Last, with wide arms the solid earth he tears,
Piles rock on rock, on mountain mountain rears;
Heaves up huge Abyla on Afric's sand,
Crowns with high Calpe Europe's salient strand,
Crests with opposing towers the splendid scene,
And pours from urns immense the sea between.
Loud o'er her whirling flood Charybdis roars,
Affrighted Scylla bellows round her shores,
Vesuvio groans through all his echoing caves,
And Etna thunders o'er the insurgent waves."

From the address to the Gnomes, or earth-nymphs, which

occupies the second canto, we will extract our author's explanation, or theory, of "the fine forms on Portland's mystic vase"—the beautiful and world-renowned vase now in the British Museum:—

"Here, by fallen columns and disjoined arcades,
On mouldering stones, beneath deciduous shades,
Sits human-kind, in hieroglyphic state,
Serious, and pondering on their changeful fate;
While, with inverted torch and swimming eyes,
Sinks the fair shade of mortal life, and dies.
There, the pale ghost through death's wide portal bends
His timid feet, the dusky steep descends:
With smiles assuasive love divine invites,
Guides on broad wing, with torch-uplifted lights;
Immortal life, her hand extending, courts
The lingering form, his tottering step supports;
Leads on to Pluto's realms the dreary way,
And gives him trembling to Elysian day.
Beneath, in sacred robes the priestess dressed,
The coif close-hooded, and the fluttering vest,
With pointed finger guides the initiate youth,
Unweaves the many-coloured veil of truth,
Drives the profane from mystery's bolted door,
And silence guards the Eleusinian lore."

As a specimen of Darwin's skill in the description of material phenomena in verse, we will give the passage on weaving and spinning, including Arkwright's then novel invention of mechanical cotton-spinning, from the second canto of the Loves of the Plants:—

Inventress of the woof, fair Lina[1] flings
The flying shuttle through the dancing strings;
Inlays the broidered weft with flowery dyes;
Quick beat the reeds, the pedals fall and rise;
Slow from the beam the lengths of warp unwind,
And dance and nod the massy weights behind.
Taught by her labours, from the fertile soil
Immortal Isis clothed the banks of Nile;
And fair Arachne with her rival loom
Found undeserved a melancholy doom.
Five[2] sister nymphs with dewy fingers twine
The beamy flax, and stretch the fibre-line;

[1] From the Latin name for flax, *linum*.

[2] The plant Linum, in the Linnæan system, has five males and five females in each flower.

Quick eddying threads from rapid spindles reel,
Or whirl with beating foot the dizzy wheel.
Charmed round the busy fair five shepherds press,
Praise the nice texture of their snowy dress,
Admire the artists, and the art approve,
And tell with honeyed words the tale of love.
So now, where Derwent rolls his dusky floods
Through vaulted mountains, and a night of woods,
The nymph Gossypia[1] treads the velvet sod,
And warms with rosy smiles the watery god;
His ponderous oars to slender spindles turns,
And pours o'er massy wheels his foamy urns;
With playful charms her hoary lover wins,
And wields his trident, while the monarch spins.
First, with nice eye emerging Naiads cull
From leathery pods the vegetable wool;
With wiry teeth revolving cards release
The tangled knots, and smooth the ravelled fleece;
Next moves the iron hand with fingers fine,
Combs the wide card, and forms the eternal line;
Slow, with soft lips, the whirling can acquires
The tender skeins, and wraps in rising spires;
With quickened pace successive rollers move,
And these retain, and those extend the rove;
Then fly the spokes, the rapid axles glow,
And slowly circumvolves the labouring wheel below.

In all this, however, it must be confessed, there is more of ingenuity than of poetry. The excess of emphasis, and overcrowding of all the artifices and licences of the poetical style, into which Darwin runs, would, if there were nothing else, betray the process of hard hammering, and, as it were, manual force and dexterity, by which he fabricated his verse; but his theory of poetry, as we have intimated above, was also radically vicious. Take the single figure of impersonation, in which he deals so largely. We shall all admit that there are bounds to the employment of this figure. Its effect is to represent a mere thing or idea as a living and individual being. But this can only be done with any poetical result in cases in which there is a natural disposition in the general mind, when in a state of excitement, to view the matter in that light. Sometimes such a tendency is checked by certain constituents or accessories of the object of too inherently mean or trivial a character, or too dis-

[1] From Gossypium, the cotton plant.

tinctly obtruding its real nature upon the senses or the imagination, to allow of its being thus metamorphosed and exalted; but it is enough that there should merely be nothing in it or about it to respond to the exertion of the poet's skill. Throughout all nature, moral and material, there must be the proper sort of worth in the substance wrought upon, as well as in the instrument, or no worthy effect will be produced. The steel that strikes fire from the flint will strike none from the brick. No husbandry can raise a harvest on a sandy sea-beach. The best teaching will not illuminate a blockhead, nor the kindest help be of any enduring service to the man who can do nothing for himself. So in the treatment of a subject poetically; it cannot be done unless there be poetry in the subject, as well as in the writer. No poetical power or skill, for example, could give any grandeur or solemnity to the prosopopœia either of a wheelbarrow, or of the art of making wheelbarrows. It would merely turn out something utterly flat and dead, if it did not prove ridiculous. It would resemble an attempt to compound gunpowder out of sulphur and common earth. The great constituent elements of the poetical in the nature of things are few in number. Whatever can be made to flash a new combination, or other exciting image, upon the fancy admits of poetical treatment and embellishment in an inferior degree; but all high poetry has its source in passion,—in veneration, in love, in terror, in hatred, in revenge, or some other of those strong emotions that, as it were, transport the mind out of and above itself, and give it to see as with a new intelligence and with other organs. But such emotions are not to be excited by such phenomena, whether of art or nature, as those with which Darwin's poetry principally deals. Many of the processes of mechanics, of chemistry, of vegetation which he describes are in the highest degree curious and interesting, philosophically or scientifically considered; but that is quite a different thing from being poetically interesting or exciting. We may almost say that the one quality is directly opposed to and destructive of the other. Poetry and science are two rival and hostile powers. The latter is continually employed in encroaching upon and subjugating to itself the dominion of the former, which, however, is happily infinite in extent, so that, no matter how much of it may be thus wrested away, it never can suffer any real diminution. Whenever anything has been perfectly reduced to matter of science, its poetical character is

extinguished: it ceases to appeal to any passion or affection. What was veneration or terror, religion or superstition, becomes now satisfied and unimpassioned intelligence. Imagination is dethroned there, its creative power abolished and destroyed, its transforming illumination made impossible. Even mere wonder, the lowest of all the imaginative states of mind, ceases when the scientific comprehension is complete; for, of course, when understood, no one thing is really more wonderful than another, any more than it is essentially more majestic;—the blue sky is but "a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours"—its golden fires, the ever-circling squadrons of the host of heaven, the suns and planets of a million systems, but another form or development of some such humble and commonplace incident as the rising of the dust from the high-road on a windy day, or of the smoke any day from a kitchen chimney. The tendency of science is to reduce and level; the tendency of poetry is to magnify and exalt. Each, therefore, has its proper and peculiar ground; they cannot act in concert, and upon the same ground: in other words, it is impossible to treat any subject at once scientifically and poetically. That is what Darwin has attempted, or professes to do; but in truth the spirit of his poetry is scientific, and only the form poetical. His verses are profusely decorated with similitudes and other poetical figures and forms of speech; but both the manner in which he views his subject, and his subject itself, are anti-poetical. His poetry appeals to none of what may be called our original and universal sympathies. It addresses itself, not to our hearts as moulded and inspired by nature and by those common influences of various kinds which are to us almost a second nature, but to our heads, as artificially, accidentally, and unequally furnished, or stuffed, by books, or colleges, or laboratories. For the most part, therefore, it fails of making any deep impression; but not unfrequently the effect is even jarring, and a note is struck altogether different from what the poet intended, just as would happen with a musician, who, with whatever power of fingering, or other brilliancy in execution, should persist in disregarding any natural peculiarity of his instrument. As little or no aid is sought from the ordinary associations which may be presumed to be in the reader's mind, so whenever it is convenient such associations and preconceptions are outraged without hesitation. Thus a story of two lovers (in the address to the Water Nymphs, in the third canto of the

Economy of Vegetation), intended to be very pathetic, is commenced in the following droll fashion :—

"Where were ye, nymphs! in those disastrous hours
Which wrapt in flames Augusta's[1] sinking towers?
Why did ye linger in your wells and groves
When sad Woodmason mourned her infant loves?
When thy fair daughters, with unheeded screams,
Ill-fated Molesworth! called the loitering streams?"

We must give the rest of this narrative for the sake of some choice Darwinian epithets, and other flowers of speech :—

"The trembling nymph, *on bloodless fingers hung,*
Eyes from the tottering wall the distant throng,
With ceaseless shrieks her sleeping friends alarms,
Drops *with singed hair* into her lover's arms.
The illumined mother seeks with footsteps fleet
Where hangs the safe balcony o'er the street;
Wrapped in her sheet, her youngest hope suspends,
And, panting, lowers it to her tiptoe friends;
Again she hurries on affection's wings,
And now a third, and now a fourth she brings;
Safe all her babes, *she smooths her horrent brow,*
And bursts through bickering flames, *unscorched below.*
So, by her son arraigned, with feet unshod
O'er burning bars indignant Emma trod.
"E'en on the day when youth with beauty wed,
The flames surprised them in their nuptial bed;
Seen at the opening sash with bosom bare,
With wringing hands and dark dishevelled hair,
The blushing bride with wild disordered charms
Round her fond lover winds her ivory arms;
Beat, as they clasp, their throbbing hearts with fear,
And many a kiss is mixed with many a tear.
Ah me! in vain the labouring engines pour
Round their pale limbs the ineffectual shower!
Then crashed the floor, while shrinking clouds retire,
And love and virtue sunk amid the fire!
With piercing screams afflicted strangers mourn,
And their white ashes mingle in their urn."

Besides that every line in this laboured description is manifestly prompted and regulated chiefly by the necessities of the metre, were it not that the most prosaic or most affected account of such a situation cannot hide its real horrors, the picture of the blushing, and the kissing, and the winding of the ivory arms,

[1] London's.

and the ineffectual deluging of the pale limbs, would be almost ludicrous. But the sense of the ludicrous was wanting in Darwin: as there is little genuine pathos in anything he has written, so there is not a trace of humour. It is in his first published poem, however, The Loves of the Plants (now forming the second part of the Botanic Garden), that this insensibility to the ridiculous is most remarkably shown; the whole conception of that performance, the idea of making a serious poem out of the Linnæan system of botany, is an absurdity which would be incredible if the thing had not been actually attempted. In what manner, and with what success, let the commencement of the singular rhapsody show:—

First the tall Canna[1] lifts his curled brow
Erect to heaven, and plights his nuptial vow;
The virtuous pair, in milder regions born,
Dread the rude blast of autumn's icy morn;
Round the chill fair he folds his crimson vest,
And clasps the timorous beauty to his breast.
Thy love, Callitriche,[2] two virgins share,
Smit with thy starry eye and radiant hair;
On the green margin sits the youth, and laves
His floating train of tresses in the waves;
Sees his fair features paint the streams that pass,
And bends for ever o'er the watery glass.
Two brother swains, of Collin's gentle name,[3]
The same their features, and their forms the same,
With rival love for fair Collinia sigh,
Knit the dark brow, and roll the unsteady eye.
With sweet concern the pitying beauty mourns,
And soothes with smiles the jealous pair by turns.
Sweet blooms Genista[4] in the myrtle shade,
And ten fond brothers woo the haughty maid.
Two knights before thy fragrant altar bend,
Adored Melissa,[5] and two squires attend.
Meadia's[6] soft chains five suppliant beaux confess,
And hand in hand the laughing belle address;
Alike to all she bows with wanton air,
Rolls her dark eye, and waves her golden hair.

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[1] The cane, or Indian reed; each flower of which contains one male and one female.
[2] Fine-hair, star-grass; one male and two females.
[3] Collinsonia; two males and one female.
[4] Dyer's broom; ten males and one female.
[5] Balm; four males and one female.
[6] American cowslip; five males and one female.

Wooed with long care, Curcuma,[1] cold and shy,
Meets her fond husband with averted eye:
Four beardless youths the obdurate beauty move
With soft attentions of Platonic love.
With vain desires the pensive Alcea[2] burns,
And, like sad Eloisa, loves and mourns.
The freckled Iris[3] owns a fiercer flame,
And three unjealous husbands wed the dame.
Cupressus[4] dark disdains his dusky bride;
One dome contains them, but two beds divide.
The proud Osyris[5] flies his angry fair;
Two houses hold the fashionable pair.
With strange deformity Plantago[6] treads,
A monster birth! and lifts his hundred heads.
Yet with soft love a gentle belle he charms,
And clasps the beauty in his hundred arms.
So hapless Desdemona, fair and young,
Won by Othello's captivating tongue,
Sighed o'er each strange and piteous tale distressed,
And sunk enamoured on his sooty breast.

Is all this really a whit less ridiculous than the parody of it in The Loves of the Triangles?—

For me, ye Cissoids, round my temples bend
Your wandering curves; ye Conchoids, extend;
Let playful Pendules quick vibration feel,
While silent Cyclois rests upon her wheel;
Let Hydrostatics, simpering as they go,
Lead the light Naiads on fantastic toe;
Let shrill Acoustics tune the tiny lyre;
With Euclid sage fair Algebra conspire;
The obedient Pulley strong Mechanics ply;
And wanton Optics roll the melting eye.

. . . . . .

Alas that partial Science should approve
The sly Rectangle's too licentious love!
For three bright nymphs the wily wizard burns;
Three bright-eyed nymphs requite his flame by turns.

. . . . . .

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[1] Turmeric; one male and one female, together with four filaments without anthers.

[2] Double hollyhocks.

[3] Flower-de-luce; three males and one female.

[4] Cypress.

[5] The males and females of the Osyris are on different plants.

[6] Rose-plantain.

And first the fair Parabola behold
Her timid arms with virgin blush unfold!
Though on one focus fixed, her eyes betray
A heart that glows with love's resistless sway;
Though, climbing oft, she strive with bolder grace
Round his tall neck to clasp her fond embrace,
Still, ere she reach it, from his polished side
Her trembling hands in devious Tangents glide.
Not thus Hyperbole;—with subtlest art
The blue-eyed wanton plays her changeful part.

. . . . . .

Yet why, Ellipsis, at thy fate repine?
More lasting bliss, securer joys are thine.
Though to each fair his treacherous wish may stray,
Though each in turn may seize a transient sway,
'Tis thine with mild coercion to restrain,
Twine round his struggling heart, and bind with endless chain.

. . . . . .

So down thy hill, romantic Ashbourn, glides
The Derby Dilly, carrying three insides.
One in each corner sits, and lolls at ease,
With folded arms, propped back, and outstretched knees;
While the pressed Bodkin, punched and squeezed to death,
Sweats in the midmost place, and scolds, and pants for breath.

ANNA SEWARD; LADY MILLER; THE DELLA CRUSCANS.

It must be regarded as a real misfortune for Dr. Darwin's fame, though a ludicrous one, that he should have had such a biographer and commentator upon his works as Miss Anna Seward. Anna has herself a claim upon our notice as one of the poetical lights of this time. Besides various contributions to magazines, she emitted separately, and with her name, in the last twenty years of the century, a succession of elegies, monodies, odes, sonnets, poetical epistles, adieus, &c., about Captain Cook, Major André, Lady Miller of Batheaston, and other persons and things, which were generally read in their day, and were, after her death, in 1809, at the age of sixty-two, collected and republished in three octavo volumes under the care of Walter Scott, who had formed her acquaintance in the early part of his career, and upon whom she had imposed the honour of being her literary executor. A selection from her Letters, which she had

bequeathed to Constable, the Edinburgh bookseller, appeared about the same time in six volumes. But decidedly her most remarkable performance, and the one by which her name is likely to be the longest preserved, is the octavo volume she gave to the world in 1804, under the title of Memoirs of the Life of Dr. Darwin, chiefly during his residence at Lichfield, with Anecdotes of his Friends, and Criticisms on his Writings. Here we have Anna herself, as well as her friend the poetic Doctor, at full length. Anna's notion is, that the Botanic Garden ought to have been her poem, not Darwin's, if matters had been fairly managed. The Doctor, it seems, about the year 1777, purchased "a little, wild, umbrageous valley, a mile from Lichfield, irriguous from various springs, and swampy from their plenitude." This he soon dressed up into a very neat imitation of Paradise, and then, having till now "restrained his friend Miss Seward's steps to this her always favourite scene," he allowed her to visit it, when, the lady informs us, "she took her tablets and pencil, and, seated on a flower-bank, in the midst of that luxuriant retreat, wrote the following lines, while the sun was gilding the glen, and while birds of every plume poured their song from the boughs." Now, be it observed, the Doctor was not even with her on the flower-bank: it was intended that they should have gone to see Paradise together, "but a medical summons into the country deprived her of that pleasure." The lines, therefore, were wholly the produce of her own particular muse and her own black-lead pencil. They are substantially the commencing lines of the First Book of the Botanic Garden. When the authoress presented them to Darwin, he said that they ought to form the exordium of a great work, and proposed that Anna should write such a work "on the unexplored poetic ground of the Linnæan system," to which he would provide prose notes. Anna answered, modestly, "that, besides her want of botanic knowledge, the plan was not strictly proper for a female pen"—but that she thought it was just the thing for "the efflorescence of his own fancy." It would appear that, soon after this, Darwin began the composition of his great poem; but previously, the lady tells us, a few weeks after they were composed, he "sent the verses Miss S. wrote in his Botanic Garden (that is, the Lichfield Paradise, so called) to the Gentleman's Magazine, and in her name."—"From thence," she proceeds, "they were copied in the Annual Register [where we

have not been able to find them]; but, without consulting her, he had substituted for the last six lines eight of his own. He afterwards, and again without the knowledge of their author, made them the exordium to the First Part of his poem, published, for certain reasons, some years after the Second Part had appeared. No acknowledgment was made that those verses were the work of another pen. Such acknowledgment ought to have been made, especially since they passed the press in the name of their real author. They are somewhat altered in the exordium to Dr. Darwin's poem, and eighteen lines of his own are interwoven with them." The lines having been only forty-six originally, and twenty-six of those in the Doctor's exordium being thus admitted to be of his own composition, it might seem that the theft was reduced to a somewhat small matter; but Miss Seward, not unreasonably, holds that in thus rifling her poem, probably of its best verses, Darwin did her the same injury as if he had appropriated the whole; and therefore in returning, in a subsequent page, to this "extraordinary, and, in a poet of so much genius, unprecedented instance of plagiarism," and quoting against him one of his own critical canons, that "a few common flowers of speech may be gathered as we pass over our neighbour's ground, but we must not plunder his cultivated fruit," she bitterly charges him with having "forgotten that just restraint when he took, unacknowledged, *forty-six entire lines*, the published verses of his friend, for the exordium of the first part of his work." After all, it has been doubted by the world if that scene of the flower-bank and the tablets was anything more than a pleasant dream of Anna's, or if she had anything to do with the authorship of the forty-six verses at all, beyond allowing them to be published with her name in the magazines. She has been proved to be incorrect in her recollections of other matters about which she was as obstinate as she was about this: her memory had the worst defect, of being apt to remember too much.

Miss Seward's own poetry, with much more sentimentality and much less sense and substance, belongs to the same school with Darwin's. Hers is the feeble commonplace of the same laboured, tortuous, and essentially unnatural and untrue style out of which he, with his more powerful and original genius, has evolved for himself a distinctive form or dialect. This style has subsisted among us, in one variation or another, and with more or less

of temporary acceptance, in every era of our poetry. It is mimicked by Pope, in his Song by a Person of Quality, written in the year 1733; it is the Euphuism of the Elizabethan age, gently ridiculed by Shakespeare, in his Love's Labours Lost, though then made brilliant and imposing by the wit and true poetic genius of Lilly; it is the same thing that is travestied by Chaucer in his Rime of Sir Thopas. Perhaps, however, it had in no former time made so much din, or risen to such apparent ascendancy, as at the date of which we are now speaking, the last years of the eighteenth century. Nor had it ever before assumed a shape or character at once so extravagant and so hollow of all real worth or power. The first impulse seems to have been caught from Italy, the foreign country whose literature has in every age exercised, for good or for evil, the greatest influence upon our own. The writers of what is called the Della Cruscan school had their predecessors and progenitors in the small manufacturers of rhyme, male and female, collected about her by Lady Miller, who, when she set up her Parnassus and Wedgwood-ware vase at Batheaston, and established the weekly competitions in elegies and epigrams, songs and sonnets, which went on through the instrumentality of the said mystic vase till her death in 1781, had just returned from a tour in Italy with her husband, of which she published an account, in three volumes of Letters, in 1776. Their performances were given to the world under the title of Poetical Amusements at a Villa near Bath, in a succession of volumes which appeared between 1770 and 1780. Miss Seward was one of the contributors to this Batheaston poetry. It does not seem, however, to have attracted much notice beyond the circle in which the writers and their patroness moved; at most it was regarded as belonging rather to the provincial than to either the national or the metropolitan literature of the time. In the Della Cruscan school the thing came to a head. "In 1785," as the matter is recorded in the Introduction to the Baviad and Mæviad, "a few English of both sexes, whom chance had jumbled together at Florence, took a fancy to while away their time in scribbling high-flown panegyrics on themselves; and complimentary canzonettas on two or three Italians, who understood too little of the language in which they were written to be disgusted with them." Among them were Mrs. Piozzi, the widow of Johnson's friend Thrale, now the wife of her daughter's music-master;

Mr. Bertie Greathead, a man of property and good family; Mr. Robert Merry, who specially took to himself the designation of Della Crusca; Mr. William Parsons, another English gentleman of fortune; &c. These people first printed a volume of their rhymes under the title of The Florence Miscellany. Afterwards they and a number of other persons, their admirers and imitators, began to publish their lucubrations in England, chiefly in two new daily newspapers, called The World and The Oracle; from which they were soon collected, and recommended with vast laudation to the public attention, in a volume entitled The Album, by Bell the printer. "While the epidemic malady was spreading from fool to fool," continues Gifford, "Della Crusca came over, and immediately announced himself by a sonnet to Love. Anna Matilda wrote an incomparable piece of nonsense in praise of it; and the two 'great luminaries of the age,' as Mr. Bell calls them, fell desperately in love with each other. From that period not a day passed without an amatory epistle, fraught with lightning and thunder, et quicquid habent telorum armamentaria cœli. The fever turned to a frenzy: Laura Maria, Carlos, Orlando, Adelaide, and a thousand other nameless names caught the infection; and, from one end of the kingdom to the other, all was nonsense and Della Crusca." After this had gone on for some time, Gifford took up his pen, and in 1794 produced his Baviad, which in 1796 was followed by its continuation, the Mæviad. It is only in these two poems that the memory of most of the unhappy Della Cruscan songsters has been preserved—an immortality which may be compared with that conferred by the Newgate Calendar. We may transfer to our historic page the principal names, in addition to those already mentioned, that figure in these celebrated satires—adding a few particulars as to some of them gleaned from other sources. A few of the writers, we may remark, that got bespattered in the course of Gifford's somewhat energetic horse-play, have survived and recovered from his corrosive mud and any connexion they may have had with the Della Cruscan folly:—such as the dramatists O'Keefe, Morton, Reynolds, and Holcroft; the younger Colman, who had already, in 1795, produced his Sylvester Daggerwood, besides other dramatic pieces; Mrs. Cowley, the clever authoress of The Belle's Stratagem; and no less a person than the prince of biographers, James Boswell, of whose Johnsonianism, however, people in general as yet discerned only the

ludicrous excess;—not to speak of such rather more than respectable rhymers as Edward Jerningham, the author of numerous plays and poems; Miles Peter Andrews, noted for his prologues and epilogues, which were occasionally lively as well as rattling; and perhaps we ought also to add, in a proper spirit of gallantry, the somewhat too famous Mrs. Robinson, who, with all her levity, intellectual as well as moral was not without some literary talent and poetical feeling. Mrs. Piozzi, too, of course, though not the wisest of women, must be held to have been by no means *all* ignorance and pretension.* But the general herd of the Della Cruscans may be safely set down as having been mere blatant blockheads. Of some of the fictitious signatures quoted by Gifford we find no interpretation: such as Arno, Cesario, Julia, &c. Others of the names he mentions are real names. Topham, for instance, is Mr. Edward Topham, the proprietor of The World; "monosoph Este," as he calls him, is the Rev. Charles Este, principal editor of that paper; Weston is Joseph Weston, a small magazine critic of the day. Two of the minor offenders, to whom he deals a lash or two in passing, are James Cobbe, a now forgotten farce-writer; and Frederick Pilon, who was, we believe, a player by profession. The most conspicuous names, besides Merry and Greathead, are Mit Yenda, or Mot Yenda, stated to be the anagram of a Mr. Timothy or Thomas Adney, of whom we know nothing; Edwin, which stands for a Mr. Thomas Vaughan, the same person, we suppose, who wrote a farce called The Hotel, and one or two other things of the same sort, about twenty years before this time; and especially Tony or Anthony Pasquin, the *nom de guerre* of a John Williams, the author of loads both of verse and prose. If we may judge by a collection of the Poems, as they are called, of this Williams, or Pasquin, published, in two volumes, in 1789—a second edition, with a long list of subscribers, sparkling with titled names—Gifford's representation of the emptiness, feebleness, and sounding stupidity of the Della Cruscans is no exaggeration at all. Nothing, certainly, was ever printed on decent paper more worth-

* Much new light has been lately thrown on the life and character of this famous lady by Mr. Hayward's two lively and amusing volumes, entitled, Autobiography, Letters, and Literary Remains of Mrs. Piozzi (Thrale), Lon. 1861. See, also, for a view of some parts of the subject different from that of Mr. Hayward, the article on his book in the Edinburgh Review for April, 1861.

less and utterly despicable in every way than this poetry of the great Anthony Pasquin, who, in quite a lofty and patronizing style, dedicates one of his volumes to Mr. Pitt, and the other in part to Sir Joshua Reynolds, in part to Warren Hastings (so economically does he distribute the precious honour);—who has all these three distinguished persons among his subscribers, in company with most of the rank and eminence of the time;—and whom his friends and admirers, West Dudley Digges, W. Whitby of Cambridge, Thomas Bellamy, Frederick Pilon, William Upton, and J. Butler—all, he tells us, "of high estimation in the world of literature,"—in a series of introductory odes and other rhyming laudations, extol as another Martial and Juvenal combined,—the reformer of the age—the scourge of folly—animating the just criticism of Persius with a brighter fire than Churchill's—"at once the Pride and Terror of the Land"—a Dryden come to life again—the greatest wit since Butler—a giant, magnanimous and proud, fit only to contend with giants. "Our children's children," exclaims Dudley Digges,

> "Our children's children o'er thy honoured dust
> Shall raise the sculptured tomb and laureled bust;
> Inscribe the stone with monumental woe,
> While the big tears in gushing torrents flow!"

"Resistless bard!" Pilon breaks out—

> "by every science owned,
> Thou shalt be universally renowned!
> Well may you tread all competition down:
> Originality is all your own."

But far beyond this is the fine frenzy of William Upton. "Pasquin!" roars out this idiot striving to get in a passion—

> "Pasquin! Can nought thy daring pen impede,
> Or stem the venom of thy critic gall?
> Shall thy effusions make whole legions bleed,
> And thou sit smiling as their numbers fall?
>
> "By heaven! I'll probe thee to the heart's warm core,
> If Thespis hurl again his satire round,
> E'en thy existence, by the gods, I've swore
> To bring, by strength Samsonian, to the ground!
>
> "For know, that giants should with giants vie, &c."

And afterwards—

> "Imperious tyrant, *doth* my threats affright
> Thy yet ungoverned and undaunted soul?
> Or rather fill thee with renewed delight,
> *Such as when Paris lovely Helen stole?*"

So much for contemporary praise—at least when estimated by the number and vehemence rather than by the true worth and authority of the voices! This man Upton, too, had published at least one volume of rhymes of his own, and no doubt was considered by many others as well as by himself to be one of the poetical luminaries of the age. The frantic insipidities we have quoted, however, may serve to give a right notion of the whole of this singular phenomenon—of what the Della Cruscan poetry was, and also of the nature and extent of the celebrity and admiration which it for a time enjoyed. Of course, it could not deceive the higher order of cultivated minds; but even in what is called the literary world there are always numbers of persons easily imposed upon as to such matters, and at the same time favourably placed for imposing upon others; poetical antiquaries, editors, and commentators, for example, who, naturally enough, take themselves, and are taken by the multitude, to be the best judges of the article which it seems to be in a manner their trade to deal in, but who, in truth, for the most part do not know good poetry from bad, or from no poetry at all. Witness the manner in which about this very time some of the most laborious of the Shakespearian commentators, and other literati of high name, were taken in by the miserable forgeries of Ireland. No wonder, then, that Tony Pasquin too had his literary as well as fashionable admirers. No doubt his chief acceptance, and that of the other Della Cruscan warblers, male and female, was with what is (or rather was, for the phrase in that sense is now gone out) called the town—in other words, the mere populace of the reading world, whose voice is not, and cannot be, more potential for any enduring effect than that of any other mob; yet the discreditable infatuation—the parallel of that of Queen Titania for Bottom the weaver, with his ass's head—

> I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again:
> Mine ear is much enamoured of thy note—

might have lasted considerably longer, and even spread farther than it did, had it not been checked by Gifford's vigorous

exposure and castigation. He himself intimates, in the Preface to the Mæviad, that he had been charged with breaking butterflies upon a wheel; but "many a man," he adds, "who now affects to pity me for wasting my strength upon unresisting imbecility, would, not long since, have heard their poems with applause, and their praises with delight." On the other hand, their great patron, Bell, the printer, accused him of "bespattering nearly all the poetical eminence of the day." "But, on the whole," he says, "the clamour against me was not loud; and was lost by insensible degrees in the applause of such as I was truly ambitious to please. Thus supported, the good effects of the satire (gloriose loquor) were not long in manifesting themselves. Della Crusca appeared no more in the Oracle, and, if any of his followers ventured to treat the town with a soft sonnet, it was not, as before, introduced by a pompous preface. Pope and Milton resumed their superiority; and Este and his coadjutors silently acquiesced in the growing opinion of their incompetency, and showed some sense of shame."

The Shakespeare Papers.

Of the forgeries of William Henry Ireland it is only necessary to record that, after the pretended old parchments had been exhibited for some months in Norfolk Street, where they were beheld and perused with vast reverence and admiration by sundry eminent scholars and critics, their contents were printed in December, 1795, in a magnificent two-guinea folio, published by subscription among the believers, with the title of Miscellaneous Papers and Legal Instruments, under the hand and seal of William Shakespeare, including the Tragedy of King Lear, and a small fragment of Hamlet, from the original MSS.; that the professed editor was Samuel Ireland, the father of the fabricator; that the tragedy of Kynge Vorrtygerne, an additional piece of manufacture from the same workshop, was brought out at Drury Lane in March following; that Malone's conclusive Inquiry into the Authenticity of the papers appeared just in time to herald that performance; that young Ireland himself the same year acknowledged the imposition (at the same time acquitting

his father of all share in it) in his Authentic Account of the Shakspeare Manuscripts (afterwards extended in his Confessions relative to the Shakspeare Forgery, published in 1805); and that, notwithstanding all this, George Chalmers came out in 1797, with An Apology for the Believers, which he followed up with another thick octavo, entitled A Supplemental Apology, two years after. Malone's exposure, founded entirely on evidence external to the merits of the poetry thus impudently attributed to Shakespeare, was, as we have said, demonstrative enough; but it ought not to have been required: the wretched rubbish should have been its own sufficient refutation. Vortigern, indeed, was damned, after Malone had sounded his catcall; but that persons occupying such positions in the literary world as Pye, the poet laureate, Boswell, John Pinkerton, George Chalmers, Dr. Parr, &c., should have mistaken, as they did, the poetry of Ireland for that of Shakespeare, could only have happened in a time in which there was very little true feeling generally diffused, even among persons to whom the public naturally looked up for guidance in such matters, either of Shakespeare or of poetry. The Della Cruscan poetry had its proper and natural sequel in the Shakespeare papers.

The Pursuits of Literature.

Contemporaneously with Gifford's Baviad and Mæviad appeared another remarkable satirical poem, The Pursuits of Literature, now known to have been written by the late Thomas James Mathias, the author of many other pieces both in verse and prose (among the rest, of a number of poetical compositions in Italian, published in the latter part of his life), although, we believe, it never was publicly acknowledged by him. The First Part, or Dialogue, of the Pursuits of Literature came out in May, 1794; the Second and Third together, in May, 1796; the Fourth and last in July, 1797. The Four Dialogues were collected and republished together in January, 1798: this is called the fifth edition; before the end of the same year two more editions had been called for; and that before us, dated 1805, is numbered the thirteenth. The poem, which consists in all of only between

1500 and 1600 lines, spread over a volume of 450 pages, takes a general survey both of the literature and politics of its day; but the interest of the work lies chiefly in the prose prefaces and notes, the quantity of which amounts to about ten times that of the verse. And, in truth, the prose is in every way the cleverest and most meritorious part of the performance. Mathias's gift of song was not of a high order; his poetry is of the same school with Gifford's, but the verse of the Pursuits of Literature has neither the terseness and pungency nor the occasional dignity and elegance which make that of the Baviad and Mæviad so successful an echo of Pope—the common master of both writers. The notes, however, though splenetic, and avowing throughout a spirit of the most uncompromising partisanship, are written with a sharp pen, as well as in a scholarly style, and, in addition to much Greek and Latin learning, contain a good deal of curious disquisition and anecdote. Most of the literary and political notorieties, great and small, of that day, are noticed by the author—himself not excepted;* and it is interesting and amusing to look back from this distance, and to remark how time has dealt with the several names introduced, and what final judgments she has passed on his likings and dislikings.

Other Satirical Poetry:—Mason; The Rolliad; Probationary Odes; Peter Pindar.

This may be said to have been especially the age of literary and political satire in England. Most of it, however, was in a lighter style than the Pursuits of Literature or the Baviad and Mæviad. These poems were the energetic invectives of Juvenal and Persius after the more airy ridicule of Horace. Perhaps the liveliest and happiest of all the quick succession of similar *jeux d'esprit* that appeared from the first unsettlement of the power and supremacy of Lord North to the termination of the war of parties by the firm establishment of the premiership of Pitt, was Richard Tickell's Anticipation, published a few days before the

* See a note on line 151 of Dialogue First, where mention is made of "Mr. Mathias's candid and comprehensive Essay" on Rowley's poems (written in defence of their authenticity).

meeting of parliament in November, 1778. It was an anticipation of the king's speech and the coming debates on it in the two Houses; and so much to the life was each noble lord and honourable member hit off, that, it is said, they one after another, to the infinite amusement of their hearers, fell in their actual orations into the forms of expression and modes of argument and illustration that had been assigned to them, only drifting the faster and the farther in that direction the more they strove to take another course. Poor Tickell, the grandson of Addison's friend, Thomas Tickell, after making the town merry by other sportive effusions both in prose and verse, put an end to his life by throwing himself from his bedroom window at Hampton Court Palace in November, 1793. The Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers, with its Heroic Postscript, and the Odes to Dr. Shebbeare, to Sir Fletcher Norton, &c., which appeared in 1782 under the name of Malcolm MacGregor, of Knightsbridge, Esq., and are now known to have been the productions of the poet Mason, have been already noticed. A fortunate subject did as much perhaps for the first and most celebrated of these pieces as any remarkable merit there was in its execution; the verses would have needed to be golden indeed to give any extraordinary value to so short a performance. The Heroic Epistle is only an affair of 146 lines, with a few slight prose notes. But, although Sir William's Oriental principles of gardening afforded matter for solemn ridicule which it was impossible for him to fail in turning to some account, Mason had more spite than wit, and his wordy, laboured verse is for the most part rather insolent than caustic. The next political satire that made much noise at the time, and is still remembered, was the famous Rolliad, which appeared in a series of papers in the latter part of 1784 and beginning of 1785, immediately after the great struggle between Pitt and the Coalition. The Rolliad—so named after the late Lord Rolle, then Colonel John Rolle, one of the members for Devonshire, and a stanch adherent to the party of Pitt and the Court—was a volley of prose and verse from the side of the defeated Coalition. One of the persons principally concerned in it is understood to have been the eminent civilian, Dr. French Lawrence, Burke's friend; another is believed to have been the late George Ellis, the author of the Specimens of the Early English Poets, &c. Its tone and manner are jocular; but it is easy to see that the writers were at heart

not a little angry, and that they were bent on doing mischief. The satire is daringly personal and not unfrequently coarse, going to a much greater length in both ways than our present manners would allow. The vindictive spirit out of which it comes, too, is shown both by the pertinacity with which the more eminent victims are again and again attacked, and by the eagerness with which the smaller game also are hunted down and torn to pieces. Nobody escapes, from the new premier down to the most nameless among his retainers. Yet all this is done, as we have said, with much gaiety and laughter; and the epigrams are often as brilliant as they are stinging and exasperating. The Rolliad was followed, first by a small volume of Political Eclogues, and then by the Probationary Odes for the Laureateship, published after the election of Thomas Warton to that office on the vacancy occasioned by the death of William Whitehead. The Odes, which are supposed to be recited by their respective authors before the Lord Chamberlain, assisted by his friend Mr. Delpini, of the Haymarket Theatre, whom his lordship had sent for to serve as a guide to his inexperience in such matters, are assigned to Sir Cecil Wray, a not very literary M.P., the established butt of the Whig wits of those days—("the words by Sir Cecil Wray, Bart., the spelling by Mr. Grojan, attorney-at-law," is the title); to Lord Mulgrave, a member of the new administration, and the author of a Voyage to the North Pole, as well as of various fugitive pieces in not the soberest verse; to Sir Joseph Mawbey, another ministerial M.P., who appears to have dealt, not in poetry, but in pigs; to Sir Richard Hill, the methodistical baronet, brother of Rowland, the well-known preacher, and said to be given to the same kind of pious jocularity in his speeches with which Rowland used to enliven his sermons; to James Macpherson, the translator or author of Ossian, who was also at this time a member of the House of Commons (sitting as one of the representatives of the Nabob of Arcot); to Mason, the poet; to the Attorney-General, R. T. Arden (afterwards Lord Alvanley); to Sir Nathaniel Wraxall, already famous for having, as it was said, run over all the countries of the world, and learned nothing but their names; to Sir Gregory Page Turner, another loyal baronet and M.P.; to Michael Angelo Taylor, M.P.; to Major John Scott, Warren Hastings's chief agent and champion in the House of Commons; to Harry Dundas (in Scotch); to Dr. Joseph Warton, "in

humble imitation of Brother Thomas;" to Viscount Mountmorres (in Hibernian English); to the Lord Chancellor Thurlow; to the Rev. Dr. Prettyman (Pitt's tutor, afterwards Bishop of Winchester), the prose notes to whose irregular strains, "except those wherein Latin is concerned," are stated to be by John Robinson, Esq., the notorious "Jack Robinson," in popular repute the well-rewarded and unscrupulous doer of all work for all administrations; to the Marquess of Graham (the late Duke of Montrose); to Lord Mountmorres (a second attempt, in English); to Sir George Howard, K.B. (afterwards Field Marshal); to Dr. Markham, Archbishop of York; and to Warton himself, the successful candidate. The Probationary Odes proceeded from the same manufactory as the Rolliad; and they are at least equally spirited and successful. Indeed, the humour, we should say, is richer as well as brighter and freer in its flow, an effect owing partly perhaps to the form of the composition, which is not so solemn and rigid, but somewhat, also, probably, to the writers being in a kindlier mood, and less disposed to give pain to the objects of their satire. Except in a small collection of Political Miscellanies in the same style, which appeared shortly afterwards, the muse of the Rolliad and the Probationary Odes was, as far as is known, heard no more; but another mocking spirit, not to be so soon silenced, was already in the air, and beginning to "syllable men's names" in a very peculiar accent, at once singularly comic and biting. Dr. John Wolcot, formerly a preacher to a congregation of negroes in Jamaica, now settled in London as a physician, made his first appearance as Peter Pindar in his Lyric Odes [fifteen in number] to the Royal Academicians, for 1782. The style and manner of these compositions, coarse and careless enough, but full of drollery and pungency, and quite original, seems to have taken the public fancy at once. Some attention also their author would have had a right to, had it been merely for the soundness of some of his remarks, and his evident knowledge of his subject; for Wolcot, who when practising medicine at Truro had discovered and encouraged the genius of John Opie, then a working carpenter in that neighbourhood, had a true as well as cultivated feeling for art. But, although the truth or good sense of his criticism may have done something at first to bring him into notice, it was to attractions of another sort that he owed his popularity. He confined himself to his friends the Academicians, to whom he addressed another set of

odes in 1783, and a third set in 1785, till the latter year, when he came out with the first canto of his Lousiad, the earliest of his lampoons expressly or entirely dedicated to the higher game which henceforward engaged his chief attention. The king, naturally falling in his way as the founder and patron of the Academy, had from the first come in for a side-blow now and then; but from this date their majesties became the main butts of his ridicule, and it was only when no fresh scandal or lie suited for his purpose was afloat about the doings at St. James's or Kew that he wasted his time on anything else. Such a thorn in the side of the royal family did he make himself, that a negociation, it is said, was at one time entered into to purchase his silence. There can be no doubt, indeed, that his daring and incessant derision proved materially injurious to the popularity of the king and queen. Their unscrupulous assailant took all sorts of advantages, fair and unfair, and his ludicrous delineations are certainly no materials for history; but as a caricaturist in rhyme he must be placed very high. His manner, as we have observed, is quite original and his own, however much it may have been imitated since by others. His mere wit is not very pointed; but nobody tells a story better, or brings out the farce of a scene with more breadth and effect. Much of what he has left is hastily executed and worth very little; some of his attempts were not suited to the nature of his powers; much of what made people laugh heartily in his own day has lost its interest with the topics to which it relates; but it may safely be predicted that some of his comic tales, and other things which he has done best, and which have least of a mere temporary reference, will live in the language and retain their popularity. Wolcot survived till 1819; but, although he continued to write and publish till within a few years of his death (producing, among other things, a tragedy, The Fall of Portugal, which appeared without his name in 1808), all his most memorable effusions belong to the first eighteen or twenty years of his authorship. His proper successor, who may be regarded in the main as his imitator or disciple, was the late George Colman the Younger (as he persisted in calling himself so long as he lived); but it has not been generally noticed that from Wolcot Byron also has evidently caught part of the inspiration of his Don Juan—not of its golden poetry, of course, but of the fluent drollery and quaintness of its less elevated passages. Even

there, indeed, it is Wolcot refined and heightened; but still the spirit and manner are essentially the same. Compare, for instance, the harangue of Julia to her husband and his intruding myrmidons, in the first canto of Don Juan, with the Petition of the Cooks in the second canto of the Lousiad.

Other Poetical Writers of the Latter Part of the Eighteenth Century.

Of a number of other poetical writers, or verse-makers, of the latter part of the last century, very little need be said. The celebrated Sir William Jones—the Admirable Crichton of his day—published the first of his poems, consisting mostly of translations from the Asiatic languages, in 1772, in his twenty-sixth year; and he afterwards produced, from time to time, other similar translations, and also some original compositions in verse. He died, in the midst of a career of intellectual conquest which promised to embrace the whole compass of human learning, in 1794. The poetry of Sir William Jones is very sonorous and imposing; and in his happiest efforts there is not wanting nobleness of thought, or glow of passion, as well as pomp of words. He cannot, however, be called a poet of an original genius; any peculiarity of inspiration that may seem to distinguish some of his compositions is for the most part only the Orientalism of the subject, and of the figures and images. He is a brilliant translator and imitator rather than a poet in any higher sense. We cannot say even so much for some other verse-writers of this age, once of great note. Henry James Pye, who died Poet Laureate and a police magistrate in 1813 (having succeeded to the former office in 1790 on the death of Thomas Warton), had in his time discharged upon the unresisting public torrents of Progress of Refinement, Shooting, a Poem, Amusement, a Poetical Essay, Alfred, Faringdom Hill, The Aristocrat, The Democrat, and other ditch-water of the same sort, which the thirsty earth has long since drunk up. Not less unweariedly productive was Hayley, the friend and biographer of Cowper, with his Triumphs of Temper, Triumphs of Music, poetical epistles, elegies, odes, rhyming essays, plays, &c., which had

accumulated to a mass of six octavo volumes so early as 1785, and to which much more forgotten verse was afterwards added—besides his Lives of Cowper and Milton, a prose three-volume Essay on Old Maids, a novel of similar extent, &c., &c. William Hayley lived till 1820. With his prose poetry may be classed the several wooden poetical perpetrations of the late learned Richard Payne Knight—The Landscape, published in 1794; The Progress of Civil Society in 1796; The Romance of Alfred, many years after. Mr. Knight died in 1824. Here may be also properly enumerated Cumberland's worthless epics of Calvary, Richard the First, The Exodiad (the two latter written in conjunction with Sir James Bland Burges, and the last not published till 1807-8). Cumberland's Comedies have been already noticed. Another popular poet, and voluminous writer both in verse and prose, of this age was Samuel Jackson Pratt—originally a strolling player, next an itinerant lecturer, finally a Bath bookseller—who, after beginning his literary career as a writer of novels under the designation of Courtney Melmoth, Esq., produced certain long poems, in a style of singularly mawkish sentimentality and empty affectation—Sympathy, Humanity, and sundry others, with which humanity has long ceased to sympathise. Pratt, however, was quite the rage for a time—though his existence had been generally forgotten for a good many years before its earthly close in 1814. Here, too, may be mentioned the Rev. Percival Stockdale, whose first poetical effusion, Churchill Defended, dates so far back as 1765, and who continued scribbling and publishing down nearly to his death, in 1811; but all whose literary labours have passed into utter oblivion, except only his Memoirs of his own Life, published in two octavo volumes in 1809, which is a work that the world will not willingly let die, and to have written which is, of itself, not to have lived in vain. Poor Stockdale's pleasant delusion was merely, that, being one of the smallest men of his time, or of any time, he imagined himself to be one of the greatest—and his autobiography is his exposition and defence of this faith, written with an intense serenity of conviction which the most confirmed believers in anything else whatever might envy.

Mrs. Charlotte Smith, better known as a novelist, made her first appearance as an author, at the age of twenty-five, by the publication, at Chichester, in 1784, of a series of Elegiac Sonnets, in which there was at least considerable poetic promise. Miss

Brooke, daughter of Henry Brooke, the author of The Fool of Quality, published in 1790 her Reliques of Irish Poetry translated into English Verse, which is chiefly deserving of notice as having called some attention to a neglected and interesting department of ancient national literature. Hannah More had produced her first work, The Search after Happiness, a Pastoral Drama, in 1773, her two ballads, or Poetical Tales, as she called them, of Sir Eldred of the Bower and the Bleeding Rock, the following year, and several more poems, as well as sundry tragedies and other dramatic pieces, in the course of the next ten years; and she maintained her reputation as a correct, sensible, and highly moral writer of verse by her Florio and The Bas Bleu, published in 1786, and her poem entitled Slavery, which appeared, in a quarto volume, two years later. Joanna Baillie, who survived till 1851, assumed at once her much more eminent place as a poetess, by the first volume of her Plays illustrative of the Passions, which was given to the world in 1798. The late William Sotheby, besides a volume of poems published in 1794, added to our literature in 1798 his elegant version of Wieland's Oberon, the work by which his name is perhaps most likely to be preserved, although he continued to write verse down almost to his death in 1833. But perhaps the two most important poetical publications which have not been noticed, at least in their effects if not in themselves, were the Fourteen Sonnets by the Rev. Lisle Bowles, who died only in 1850, printed at Bath in 1780; and the Tales of Wonder, by Matthew Gregory Lewis (already of literary notoriety as the author of the novel of The Monk, published in 1795), which came out, in two volumes, in 1801. Mr. Bowles, whose later works amply sustained his reputation as a true poet, has the glory of having by his first verses given an impulse and an inspiration to the genius of Coleridge, who in his Biographia Literaria has related how the spirit of poetry that was in him was awakened into activity by these sonnets. Lewis, again, and his Tales of Wonder, gave in like manner example and excitement to Scott, who had indeed already published his first rhymes, partly translated, partly original, in 1796, and also his prose version of Goethe's Goetz of Berlichingen, in 1799, but had not yet given any promise of what he was destined to become. Coleridge published his forgotten drama of The Fall of Robespierre in 1794, and a volume of Poems in 1796; Wordsworth,

his Epistle in verse entitled, An Evening Walk, and also his Descriptive Sketches during a Tour in the Alps, in 1793, and the first edition of his Lyrical Ballads in 1798; Southey, is Joan of Arc in 1796 and a volume of Poems in 1797; but these writers all nevertheless belong properly to the present century, in which their principal works were produced, as well as Scott and Crabbe, and Thomas Moore, whose first publication, his Odes of Anacreon, appeared in 1800; Thomas Campbell, whose Pleasures of Hope first appeared in 1799; Walter Savage Landor, still living, whose first published poetry dates so far back as 1795; and Samuel Rogers, whose first poetry came out in 1786, and his Pleasures of Memory in 1792.

Burns.

In October or November of the same year, 1786, in which Rogers, who all but saw 1856, first made his name known to English readers by An Ode to Superstition, with other Poems, printed at London, in the fashionable quarto size of the day, the press of the obscure country-town of Kilmarnock, in Scotland, gave to the world, in an octavo volume, the first edition of the Poems, chiefly in the Scottish Dialect, of Robert Burns. A second edition was printed at Edinburgh early in the following year. Burns, born on the 25th of January, 1759, had composed most of the pieces contained in this publication in the two years preceding its appearance: his life—an April day of sunshine and storm—closed on the 21st of July, 1796; and in his last nine or ten years he may have about doubled the original quantity of his printed poetry. He was not quite thirty-seven and a half years old when he died—about a year and three months older than Byron. Burns is the greatest peasant-poet that has ever appeared; but his poetry is so remarkable in itself that the circumstances in which it was produced hardly add anything to our admiration. It is a poetry of very limited compass—not ascending towards any "highest heaven of invention," nor even having much variety of modulation, but yet in its few notes as true and melodious a voice of passion as was ever heard. It is all light and fire. Considering how little

the dialect in which he wrote had been trained to the purposes of literature, what Burns has done with it is miraculous. Nothing in Horace, in the way of curious felicity of phrase, excels what we find in the compositions of this Ayrshire ploughman. The words are almost always so apt and full of life, at once so natural and expressive, and so graceful and musical in their animated simplicity, that, were the matter ever so trivial, they would of themselves turn it into poetry. And the same native artistic feeling manifests itself in everything else. One characteristic that belongs to whatever Burns has written is that, of its kind or in its own way, it is a perfect production. It is perfect in the same sense in which every production of nature is perfect, the humblest weed as well as the proudest flower; and in which, indeed, every true thing whatever is perfect, viewed in reference to its species and purpose. His poetry is, throughout, real emotion melodiously uttered. As such, it is as genuine poetry as was ever written or sung. Not, however, although its chief and best inspiration is passion rather than imagination, that any poetry ever was farther from being a mere Æolian warble addressing itself principally to the nerves. Burns's head was as strong as his heart; his natural sagacity, logical faculty, and judgment were of the first order; no man, of poetical or prosaic temperament, ever had a more substantial intellectual character. And the character of his poetry is like that of the mind and the nature out of which it sprung—instinct with passion, but not less so with power of thought—full of light, as we have said, as well as of fire. More of matter and meaning, in short, in any sense in which the terms may be understood, will be found in no verses than there is in his. Hence the popularity of the poetry of Burns with all classes of his countrymen—a popularity more universal, probably, than any other writer ever gained, at least so immediately; for his name, we apprehend, had become a household word among all classes in every part of Scotland even in his own lifetime. Certainly at the present day, that would be a rare Lowland Scotchman, or Scotchwoman either, who should be found never to have heard of the name and fame of Robert Burns, or even to be altogether ignorant of his works. It has happened, however, from this cause, that he is not perhaps, in general, estimated by the best of his productions. Nobody, of course, capable of appreciating any of the characteristic qualities of Burns's poetry

will ever think of quoting even the best of the few verses he has written in English, as evidence of his poetic genius. In these he is Samson shorn of his hair, and become as any other man. But even such poems as his Cotter's Saturday Night, and his tale of Tam o' Shanter, convey no adequate conception of what is brightest and highest in his poetry. The former is a true and touching description in a quiet and subdued manner, suitable to the subject, but not adapted to bring out much of his illuminating fancy and fusing power of passion: the other is a rapid, animated, and most effective piece of narrative, with some vigorous comedy, and also some scene-painting in a broad, dashing style, but exhibiting hardly more of the peculiar humour of Burns than of his pathos. Of a far rarer merit, much richer in true poetic light and colour, and of a much more original and distinctive inspiration, are many of his poems which are much less frequently referred to, at least out of his own country. Take, for instance, that entitled To a Mouse, on turning her up in her Nest with the Plough, November, 1785 :—

Wee,[1] sleekit,[2] cow'rin,[3] timorous beastie,[4]
O what a panic 's in thy breastie![4]
Thou need na[5] start awa[6] sa hastie,
Wi' bickerin' brattle![7]
I wad be laith[8] to rin[9] an' chase thee,
Wi' murderin' pattle.[10]

I 'm truly sorry man's dominion
Has broken nature's social union,
An' justifies that ill opinion
Which makes thee startle
At me, thy poor earth-born companion,
An' fellow mortal.

I doubt na, whiles,[11] but thou may thieve;
What then? Poor beastie, thou maun[12] live!
A daimen icker[13] in a thrave[14]
'S a sma'[15] request:
I 'll get a blessin' wi' the lave,[16]
An' never miss 't.

---

[1] Little. [2] Sly. [3] Cowering.
[4] Diminutives of "beast," and "breast." [5] Not.
[6] Away. [7] With scudding fury. [8] Would (should) be loth.
[9] Run. [10] With murderous ploughstaff. [11] Sometimes.
[12] Must. [13] An occasional ear of corn.
[14] A double shock. [15] Is a small. [16] Remainder.

Thy wee bit housie,[1] too, in ruin!
Its silly wa's the win's are strewin'![2]
An' naething, now, to big a new ane,[3]
O' foggage[4] green!
An' bleak December's winds ensuin',
Baith snell[5] and keen!

Thou saw the fields laid bare an' waste,
An' weary winter comin' fast;
An' cozie[6] here, beneath the blast,
Thou thought to dwell;
Till crash! the cruel coulter passed
Out through thy cell.

That wee bit heap o' leaves an' stibble[7]
Has cost thee monie[8] a weary nibble!
Now thou 's[9] turned out, for a' thy trouble,
But house or hald,[10]
To thole[11] the winter's sleety dribble;
An' cranreuch cald.[12]

But, Mousie,[13] thou art no thy lane[14]
In proving foresight may be vain:
The best-laid schemes o' mice an' men
Gang aft a-gley,[15]
An' leave us nought but grief and pain,
For promised joy.

Still thou art blest compared wi' me!
The present only toucheth thee:
But och![16] I backward cast my ee[17]
On prospects drear;
An' forward, though I canna[18] see,
I guess an' fear.

A simple and common incident poetically conceived has never been rendered into expression more natural, delicately graceful, and true. Of course, however, our glossarial interpretations can convey but a very insufficient notion of the aptness of the poet's language to those to whom the Scottish dialect is not familiar. Such a phrase as "bickering brattle," for instance, is

[1] Triple diminutive of *house*—untranslatable into English.
[2] Its weak walls the winds are strewing.
[3] Nothing now to build a new one. [4] Moss. [5] Biting.
[6] Snug. [7] Very small quantity of leaves and stubble. [8] Many.
[9] Thou is (art). [10] Without house or hold. [11] Endure.
[12] Hoar-frost cold. [13] Diminutive of "mouse." [14] Not alone.
[15] Go oft awry. [16] Ah. [17] Eye. [18] Cannot.

not to be translated. The epithet "bickering" implies that sharp, explosive, fluttering violence, or impetuosity, which belongs to any sudden and rapid progressive movement of short continuance, and it expresses the noise as well as the speed. It is no doubt the same word with the old English "bickering," but used in a more extensive sense: a "bicker" means commonly a short irregular fight, or skirmish: but Milton has "bickering flame," where, although the commentators interpret the epithet as equivalent to *quivering*, we apprehend it includes the idea of *crackling* also. Darwin has borrowed the phrase, as may be seen in one of our extracts given above. Nor is it possible to give the effect of the diminutives, in which the Scottish language is almost as rich as the Italian. While the English, for example, has only its *manikin*, the Scotch has its *mannie*, *mannikie*, *bit mannie*, *bit mannikie*, *wee bit mannie*, *wee bit mannikie*, *little wee bit mannie*, *little wee bit mannikie*; and so with *wife*, *wifie*, *wifikie*, and many other terms. Almost every substantive noun has at least one diminutive form, made by the affix *ie*, as *mousie*, *housie*. We ought to notice also, that the established or customary spelling in these and other similar instances does not correctly represent the pronunciation:—the vowel sound is the soft one usually indicated by *oo*; as if the words were written *moosie*, *hoosie*, *coorin*, &c. It is an advantage that the Scottish dialect possesses, somewhat akin to that possessed by the Greek in the time of Homer, that, from having been comparatively but little employed in literary composition, and only imperfectly reduced under the dominion of grammar, many of its words have several forms, which are not only convenient for the exigencies of verse, but are used with different effects or shades of meaning. In particular, the English form is always available when wanted; and it is the writer's natural resource when he would rise from the light or familiar style to one of greater elevation or earnestness. Thus, in the above verses, while expressing only half-playful tenderness and commiseration, Burns writes "Now thou 's turned out" (pronounce *oot*), in his native dialect; but it is in the regular English form, "Still thou art blest," that he gives utterance to the deeper pathos and solemnity of the concluding verse.

The proper companion to this short poem is that addressed To a Mountain Daisy, on turning one down with the Plough, in April, 1786; but in that the execution is not so pure throughout, and the latter part runs somewhat into common-

place. The beginning, however, is in the poet's happi manner :—

Wee, modest, crimson-tipped flow'r,
Thou 's met me in an evil hour;
For I maun crush amang the stour [2]
Thy tender stem:
To spare thee now is past my pow'r,
Thou bonnie [3] gem.

Alas! its no [4] thy neebor [5] sweet,
The bonnie lark, companion meet!
Bending thee 'mang the dewy weet [6]
Wi' spreckled [7] breast,
When upward springing, blythe, to greet
The purpling east.

Cauld blew the bitter-biting north
Upon thy early, humble, birth;
Yet cheerfully thou glinted [8] forth
Amid the storm,
Scarce reared above the parent earth
Thy tender form.

The flaunting flowers our gardens yield
High sheltering woods and wa's maun [9] shield;
But thou beneath the random bield [10]
O' clod or stane [11]
Adorns the histie [12] stibble-field,
Unseen, alane.

There, in thy scanty mantle clad,
Thy snawy [13] bosom sun-ward spread,
Thou lifts thy unassuming head
In humble guise;
But now the share uptears thy bed,
And low thou lies!

Such is the fate of artless maid,
Sweet floweret of the rural shade!
By love's simplicity betrayed,
And guileless trust,
Till she, like thee, all soiled is laid
Low i' the dust.

---

[1] Thou hast. [2] Dust (pronounce *floor, hoor, stoor, poor*).
[3] Lovely. [4] Not. [5] Neighbour. [6] Wet. [7] Speckled.
[8] Peeped, or rather glanced (glanced'st). [9] Walls must.
[10] Shelter. [11] Stone. [12] Dry and rugged. [13] Snowy.

Such is the fate of simple bard,
On life's rough ocean luckless-starred!
Unskilful he to note the card
Of prudent lore,
Till billows rage, and gales blow hard,
And whelm him o'er!

Such fate to suffering worth is given,
Who long with wants and woes has striven,
By human pride or cunning driven
To misery's brink,
Till, wrenched of every stay but heaven,
He, ruined, *sink*!

Even thou who mourn'st the Daisy's fate,
That fate is *thine*—no distant date;
Stern Ruin's ploughshare drives, elate,
Full on thy bloom,
Till crushed beneath the furrow's weight
Shall be thy doom!

In a different style, and of another mood, but still, in the strong rush of its comic and satiric eloquence and the hurry of its whimsical fancies, not without occasional touches both of the terrific and the tender, is the glorious Address to the Deil (the Devil):—

O Thou! whatever title suit thee,
Auld[1] Hornie,[2] Satan, Nick, or Clootie,[3]
Wha,[4] in yon cavern grim an' sootie,
Closed under hatches,
Spairges[5] about the brunstane[6] cootie[7]
To scaud[8] poor wretches!

Hear me, auld Hangie,[9] for a wee,[10]
And let poor damned bodies be;
I 'm sure sma' pleasure it can gie,[11]
E'en to a deil,
To skelp[12] and scaud poor dogs like me,
An' hear us squeel!

---

[1] Old. [2] A popular name of the devil, in allusion to his horns.
[3] Another, in allusion to his *cloots*, or hoofs. [4] Who.
[5] Dashes. [6] Brimstone. [7] Wooden bowl.
[8] Scald. [9] Hangman. [10] For a little.
[11] Give. [12] Slap severely.

Great is thy power, an' great thy fame;
Far-kenned [1] and noted is thy name;
An', though yon lowin' heugh 's thy hame,[2]
Thou travels far;
An' faith! thou 's neither lag nor lame,
Nor blate [3] nor scaur.[4]

Whiles,[5] rangin' like a roarin' lion,
For prey a' [6] holes an' corners tryin';
Whiles on the strong-winged tempest flyin',
Tirling [7] the kirks;
Whiles in the human bosom pryin'
Unseen thou lurks.

I 've heard my reverend Grannie [8] say
In lanely glens [9] ye like to stray;
Or, where auld ruined castles grey
Nod to the moon,
Ye fright the nightly wanderer's way
Wi' eldritch croon.[10]

When twilight did my Grannie summon
To say her prayers, douce,[11] honest woman,
Aft yont [12] the dyke [13] she's heard ye bummin',[14]
Wi' eerie [15] drone;
Or, rustlin', through the boortrees [16] comin',
Wi' heavy groan.

Ae [17] dreary, windy, winter night,
The stars shot down wi' sklentin' [18] light,
Wi' you, mysel,[19] I gat [20] a fright,
Ayont [21] the lough;[22]
Ye like a rash-bush [23] stood in sight,
Wi' waving sugh.[24]

The cudgel in my nieve [25] did shake,
Each bristled hair stood like a stake,

---

[1] Far known. [2] Though yonder blazing coal-pit is thy home.
[3] Bashful. [4] Apt to be scared. [5] Sometimes. [6] All.
[7] Unroofing. [8] Grandmother. [9] Lonely dales.
[10] With unearthly moan (the *oo* in *noon* and *croon* pronounced like the French *u*). [11] Quiet, sedate. [12] Often beyond.
[13] Stone wall of a field. [14] Humming. [15] Ghastly, unearthly.
[16] Whortleberry bushes. [17] One. [18] Slanting. [19] Myself.
[20] Got. [21] Beyond. [22] Lake. [23] Bush of rushes.
[24] Long sighing sound. [25] Fist.

When wi' an eldritch, stour,[1] quaik, quaik,
Amang the springs
Awa' ye squattered,[2] like a drake,
On whistling wings.

Let warlocks grim, an' withered hags,
Tell how wi' you on ragweed[3] nags
They skim the muirs[4] and dizzy crags,
Wi' wicked speed;
And in kirk-yards[5] renew their leagues
Ower[6] howkit[7] dead.

Thence kintra[8] wives, wi' toil an' pain,
May plunge an' plunge the kirn[9] in vain;
For oh! the yellow treasure 's ta'en
By witching skill;
An' dawtit, twal-pint Hawkie's gane
As yell 's the bill.[10]

. . . . . .

When thowes[11] dissolve the snawy hoord,[12]
An' float the jinglin' icy boord,[13]
Then water-kelpies[14] haunt the foord[15]
By your direction,
An' nighted travellers are allured
To their destruction.

An' aft your moss-traversing spunkies[16]
Decoy the wight that late an' drunk is;
The bleezin',[17] curst, mischievous monkeys
Delude his eyes,
Till in some miry slough he sunk is
Ne'er mair[18] to rise.

When Masons' mystic word an' grip[19]
In storms an' tempests raise you up,
Some cock or cat your rage maun stop,
Or, strange to tell!
The youngest Brother ye wad whip
Aff straught[20] to hell!

---

[1] Stern and hollow. [2] Away you fluttered in water. [3] Ragwort.
[4] Moors. [5] Churchyards. [6] Over.
[7] Dug up, disinterred. [8] Country. [9] Churn.
[10] And fondly cherished, twelve-pint Hawkie (the cow) is gone as barren of milk as the bull. [11] Thaws. [12] Hoard, heap. [13] Board.
[14] Mischievous water spirits. [15] Ford. [16] Will-o'-the-Wisps.
[17] Blazing. [18] Never more. [19] Grip, clasp of the hand.
[20] Off straight.

Lang syne,[1] in Eden's bonnie yard,[2]
When youthfu' lovers first were paired,
An' all the soul of love they shared
The raptured hour,
Sweet on the fragrant, flowery swaird,[3]
In shady bow'r;

Then you, ye auld sneck-drawin'[4] dog!
Ye came to Paradise incog,
An' played on man a cursed brogue[5]
(Black be your fa'!)[6]
An' gied the infant warld a shog,[7]
Maist ruined a'.[8]

D'ye mind that day when in a bizz,[9]
Wi' reekit duds,[10] and reested gizz,[11]
Ye did present your smoutie[12] phiz,
'Mang better folk,
An' sklentit[13] on the Man of Uz
Your spitefu' joke?

An' how ye gat him i' your thrall,
An' brak him[14] out o' house an' hall,
While scabs an' blotches did him gall
Wi' bitter claw,
An' loused[15] his ill-tongued wicked scawl,[16]
Was warst ava'?[17]

But a' your doings to rehearse,
Your wily snares an' fechtin'[18] fierce,
Sin[19] that day Michael did ye pierce,
Down to this time,
Wad ding a' Lallan tongue or Erse[20]
In prose or rhyme.

An' now, auld Cloots, I ken ye're thinkin'
A certain Bardie's rantin', drinkin',
Some luckless hour will send him linkin'[21]
To your black pit;
But faith! he'll turn a corner jinkin'[22]
An' cheat you yet.

---

[1] Long since. [2] Garden. [3] Sward.
[4] Crafty, bolt-drawing. [5] Trick. [6] Fate, what befals you.
[7] Gave the infant world a push to the side. [8] That almost ruined all.
[9] Buzz. [10] Smoked rags of clothes. [11] Singed periwig. [12] Smutty.
[13] Made to fall obliquely. [14] Broke him—made him bankrupt.
[15] Let loose. [16] Scold. [17] Which was worse of all. [18] Fighting.
[19] Since. [20] Would beat all Lowland tongue or Erse (Gaelic).
[21] Tripping along. [22] Dodging.

But fare you weel, auld Nickie-ben![1]
O wad ye tak a thought an' men'![2]
Ye aiblins[3] might—I dinna ken[4]—
Still ha'e a stake:—
I'm wae[5] to think upo'[6] yon den,
E'en for your sake!

The same brilliant comic power animates the pieces entitled Scotch Drink, Death and Dr. Hornbook, the Holy Fair, the Ordination, and others of his more irreverent or reckless effusions. There is infinite spirit also in the little operatic sketch, or cantata, as it is called, of the Jolly Beggars, together with the happiest skill in painting character and manners by a few vigorous touches. As a picture of manners, however, his Hallowe'en is Burns's greatest performance—with its easy vigour, its execution absolutely perfect, its fulness of various and busy life, the truth and reality throughout, the humour diffused over it like sunshine and ever and anon flashing forth in changeful or more dazzling light, the exquisite feeling and rendering both of the whole human spirit of the scene, and also of its accessories in what we can scarcely call or conceive of as inanimate nature while reading such lines as the following:—

Whiles[7] ow'r[8] a linn[9] the burnie[10] plays,
As through the glen[11] it wimpled;[12]
Whiles round a rocky scar[13] it strays;
Whiles in a wiel[14] it dimpled;
Whiles glittered to the nightly rays,
Wi' bickering, dancing dazzle;
Whiles cookit[15] underneath the braes,
Below the spreading hazel.

But this poem is too long for quotation, and is besides well known to every reader who knows anything of Burns. We will rather present our English readers with one or two shorter pieces that may serve to illustrate another quality of the man and of his poetry—the admirable sagacity and good sense, never separated from manliness and a high spirit, that made so large

[1] Old Nick. [2] O would you take a thought and mend! [3] Possibly. [4] I do not know. [5] Sorrowful. [6] Upon. [7] Sometimes. [8] Over. [9] Waterfall. [10] Rivulet. [11] Dale. [12] Nimbly meandered. [13] Cliff. [14] Small whirlpool. [15] Slily disappeared by dipping down, skulked. [Dr. Currie interprets it, "appeared and disappeared by fits."]

a part of his large heart and understanding. All the more considerate nature of Burns speaks in the following Epistle to a Young Friend, dated May, 1786:—

I lang hae[1] thought, my youthfu' friend,
A something to have sent you,
Though it should serve nae[2] other end
Than just a kind memento;
But how the subject-theme may gang
Let time and chance determine;
Perhaps it may turn out a sang,
Perhaps turn out a sermon.

Ye 'll try the world soon, my lad,
And, Andrew dear, believe me,
Ye 'll find mankind an unco squad,[3]
And muckle[4] they may grieve ye:
For care and trouble set your thought,
Ev'n when your end 's attained;
And a'[5] your views may come to nought,
Where every nerve is strained.

I 'll no[6] say men are villains a';
The real, hardened wicked,
Wha hae nae[7] check but human law,
Are to a few restricked;[8]
But oh! mankind are unco[9] weak,
An' little to be trusted;
If *self* the wavering balance shake,
It 's rarely right adjusted!

Yet they wha fa'[10] in fortune's strife,
Their fate we should na[11] censure;
For still the important *end* of life
They equally may answer:
A man may hae an honest heart,
Though poortith[12] hourly stare him;
A man may tak[13] a neebor's[14] part,
Yet hae nae cash to spare him.

Aye free aff han'[15] your story tell,
When wi' a bosom crony;[16]
But still keep something to yoursel[17]
You scarcely tell to ony.[18]

---

[1] Long have. [2] No. [3] Strange crew. [4] Much.
[5] All. [6] Not. [7] Who have no. [8] Restricted.
[9] Very, strangely. [10] Who fall. [11] Not.
[12] Poverty. [13] Take. [14] Neighbour's.
[15] Off-hand. [16] Intimate associate. [17] Yourself. [18] Any.

Conceal yoursel as weel's[1] ye can
Frae[2] critical dissection;
But keek[3] through every other man
Wi' sharpened, slee[4] inspection.

The sacred lowe[5] o' weel-placed love,
Luxuriantly indulge it;
But never tempt the illicit rove,
Though naething should divulge it:
I wave the quantum o' the sin,
The hazard of concealing;
But oh! it hardens a' within,
And petrifies the feeling!

To catch dame Fortune's golden smile,
Assiduous wait upon her;
And gather gear by every wile
That 's justified by honour;
Not for to hide it in a hedge,
Not for a train attendant;
But for the glorious privilege
Of being independent.

The fear o' hell 's a hangman's whip
To haud[6] the wretch in order;
But where ye feel your *honour* grip,
Let that aye be your border;
Its slightest touches—instant pause;
Debar a' side pretences;
And resolutely keep its laws,
Uncaring consequences.

The great Creator to revere
Must sure become the creature;
But still the preaching cant forbear,
And even the rigid feature:
Yet ne'er with wits profane to range
Be complaisance extended;
An Atheist's laugh 's a poor exchange
For Deity offended.

When ranting round in pleasure 's ring
Religion may be blinded;
Or, if she gie[7] a random sting,
It may be little minded;

---

[1] As well as. [2] From. [3] Look slily. [4] Sly.
[5] Flame. [6] Hold. [7] Give.

But when on life we 're tempest-driven—
A conscience but a canker—
A correspondence fixed wi' heaven
Is sure a noble anchor.

Adieu, dear, amiable youth!
Your heart can ne'er be wanting;
May prudence, fortitude, and truth,
Erect your brow undaunting!
In ploughman phrase, "God send you speed,"
Still daily to grow wiser;
And may you better reck the rede[1]
Than ever did the adviser.

This poem, it will be observed, is for the greater part in English; and it is not throughout written with all the purity of diction which Burns never violates in his native dialect. For instance, in the fourth stanza the word "censure" is used to suit the exigencies of the rhyme, where the sense demands some such term as deplore or regret; for, although we might censure the man himself who fails to succeed in life (which, however, is not the idea here), we do not censure, that is blame or condemn, his fate; we can only lament it; if we censure anything, it is his conduct. In the same stanza, the expression "stare him" is, we apprehend, neither English nor Scotch: usage authorizes us to speak of poverty staring a man in the face, but not of it staring him, absolutely. Again, in the tenth stanza, we have "Religion may be blinded," apparently, for may be blinked, disregarded, or looked at as with shut eyes.* We notice these things, to prevent an impression being left with the English reader that they are characteristic of Burns. No such vices of style, we repeat, are to be found in his Scotch, where the diction is uniformly as natural and correct as it is appropriate and expressive.

Our next extract shall be a portion of his Epistle to Davie [David Sillar], a Brother Poet, in which we have something of the same strain of sentiment, with a manner, however, more fervid or impetuous:—

---

[1] "Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads,
And recks not his own read."—Shakespeare, Hamlet.

* Unless, indeed, we may interpret the word as meaning deprived of the power of seeing.

While winds frae aff[1] Ben Lomond blaw[2]
And bar the doors wi' driving snaw,[3]
And hing[4] us ow'r the ingle,[5]
I set me down to pass the time,
And spin a verse or twa[6] o' rhyme
In hamely[7] westlin[8] jingle.
While frosty winds blaw in the drift
Ben[9] to the chimla[10] lug,[11]
I grudge a wee[12] the great folk's gift,
That live sae bien[13] an' snug.
I tent[14] less and want less
Their roomy fire-side;
But hanker and canker
To see their cursed pride.

It 's hardly in a body's power
To keep, at times, frae being sour,
To see how things are shared;
How best o' chiels[15] are whiles in want,
While coofs[16] on countless thousands rant,
And ken na how to wear 't:[17]
But, Davie lad, ne'er fash[18] your head;
Though we hae little gear,
We 're fit to win our daily bread
As lang 's[19] we 're hale and fier;[20]
Mair spier na[21] nor fear na;
Auld[22] age ne'er mind a feg;[23]
The last o't,[24] the warst[25] o't,
Is only for to beg.

To lie in kilns and barns at e'en,
When banes[26] are crazed and bluid[27] is thin,
Is, doubtless, great distress!
Yet then content could make us blest;
Ev'n then sometimes we 'd snatch a taste
Of truest happiness.

---

[1] From off. [2] Blow. [3] Snow. [4] Hang.
[5] Fire. [6] Two. [7] Homely. [8] Western.
[9] Into the sitting room [within, or be-in]. [10] Chimney.
[11] Ear, corner. [12] Little. [13] So well provided, comfortable.
[14] Regard, mind. [15] Fellows. [16] Fools. [17] Spend it.
[18] Trouble. [19] As long as. [20] In sound health.
[21] More inquire not. [22] Old. [23] Fig. [24] Of it.
[25] Worst. [26] Bones. [27] Blood.

The honest heart that 's free frae a'
Intended fraud or guile,
However fortune kick the ba',[1]
Has aye some cause to smile;
And mind still you'll find still
A comfort this, nae sma',[2]
Nae mair then we 'll care then,
Nae farther can we fa'.[3]

What though, like commoners of air,
We wander out, we know not where,
But either house or hall?
Yet nature's charms, the hills and woods,
The sweeping vales and foaming floods,
Are free alike to all.
In days when daisies deck the ground,
And blackbirds whistle clear,
With honest joy our hearts will bound
To see the coming year:
On braes,[4] when we please, then,
We 'll sit and sowth[5] a tune;
Syne[6] rhyme till 't[7] we 'll time till 't,
And sing 't when we hae done.

It 's no in titles nor in rank,
It 's no in wealth like Lon'on bank,
To purchase peace and rest;
It 's no in makin' muckle mair,[8]
It 's no in books, it 's no in lear,[9]
To make us truly blest:
If happiness hae not her seat
And centre in the breast,
We may be wise, or rich, or great,
But never can be blest;
Nae treasures nor pleasures
Could make us happy lang;
The heart aye 's the part aye
That makes us right or wrang.[10]

Think ye that sic[11] as you and I,
Wha drudge and drive through wet and dry
Wi' never-ceasing toil;
Think ye, are we less blest than they
Wha scarcely tent us in their way,
As hardly worth their while?

---

[1] Ball. [2] Small. [3] Fall. [4] Banks, slopes.
[5] Whistle in a low tone. [6] Then. [7] To it.
[8] In making much more. [9] Learning. [10] Wrong. [11] Such.

Alas! how aft in haughty mood
God's creatures they oppress!
Or else, neglecting a' that 's guid,
They riot in excess!
Baith [1] careless and fearless
Of either heaven or hell!
Esteeming and deeming
It 's a' an idle tale!

Then let us cheerfu' acquiesce,
Nor make our scanty pleasures less
By pining at our state;
And, even should misfortunes come,
I, here wha sit, hae met wi' some,
An 's thankfu' [2] for them yet.
They gie the wit of age to youth;
They let us ken oursel; [3]
They make us see the naked truth,
The *real* guid and ill.
Though losses and crosses
Be lessons right severe,
There 's wit there, ye 'll get there,
Ye 'll find nae other where.

Still more animated is his Answer to the Guid Wife [Mistress] of Wauchope House, written in March, 1787, of which this is the commencement:—

I mind it weel, [4] in early date,
When I was beardless, young, and blate, [5]
An' first could thresh the barn, [6]
Or haud a yokin' on the pleugh, [7]
An', though forfoughten sair enough, [8]
Yet unco [9] proud to learn;
When first amang the yellow corn
A man I reckoned was,
And wi' the lave [10] ilk [11] merry morn
Could rank my rig [12] and lass;
Still shearing, [13] and clearing
The tither stookit raw, [14]
Wi' claivers and haivers [15]
Wearing the day awa';—

---

[1] Both. [2] And is [am] thankful. [3] Know ourself.
[4] I remember it well. [5] Modest, bashful.
[6] Thrash the corn on the barn floor. [7] Hold a yoking at the plough.
[8] Fatigued sore enough. [9] Very. [10] With the rest.
[11] Every. [12] Take rank in respect to my ridge. [13] Reaping.
[14] T'other row of shocks. [15] With idle stories and nonsense.

Ev'n then, a wish (I mind its pow'r),
A wish that to my latest hour
Shall strongly heave my breast,
That I, for poor auld Scotland's sake,
Some usefu' plan or book could make,
Or sing a sang [1] at least.
The rough bur-thistle, spreading wide
Among the bearded bear,[2]—
I turned my weeding-heuk [3] aside,
An' spared the symbol dear.
No nation, no station,
My envy e'er could raise;
A Scot still, but [4] blot still,
I knew nae higher praise.

But still the elements o' sang,
In formless jumble, right an' wrang,
Wild floated in my brain;
Till on that hairst [5] I said before,
My partner in the merry core,[6]
She roused the forming strain:
I see her yet, the sonsie [7] quean,
That lighted up the jingle,
Her witching smile, her pawky een,[8]
That gart [9] my heartstrings tingle;
I firëd, inspirëd,
At every kindling keek,[10]
But, bashing and dashing,[11]
I fearëd aye to speak.

But the most elevated and impassioned of the poems of this class is that entitled The Vision. It is too long to be quoted entire; its course, however, will be understood from the following extracts:—

The sun had closed the winter day,
The curlers quat [12] their roaring play,
An' hungered mawkin [13] ta'en her way
To kail-yards [14] green,
While faithless snaws [15] ilk [16] step betray
Whare [17] she has been.

---

[1] Song. [2] Barley. [3] Weeding-hook. [4] Without.
[5] Harvest, or rather harvest-field. [6] Corps.
[7] Good-looking, with some degree of *embonpoint*. [8] Her cunning eyes.
[9] Caused, made. [10] Sly look. [11] Feeling abashed and dashed.
[12] Quitted. [13] The hare. [14] Colewort gardens.
[15] Snows. [16] Every. [17] Where [pronounce *whar*].

The thresher's weary flingin' tree [1]
The lee-lang [2] day had tired me;
And, whan [3] the day had closed his e'e [4]
Far i' the west,
Ben i' the spence,[5] right pensivelie,
I gaed [6] to rest.

There, lanely,[7] by the ingle-cheek,[8]
I sat and eyed the spewing reek,[9]
That filled wi' hoast-provoking smeek [10]
The auld clay biggin';[11]
An' heard the restless rattons [12] squeak
About the riggin'.[13]

All in this mottie,[14] misty clime,
I backward mused on wasted time,
How I had spent my youthfu' prime,
An' done nae thing
But stringin' blethers [15] up in rhyme,
For fools to sing.

Had I to guid advice but harkit,[16]
I might, by this,[17] hae led a market,
Or strutted in a bank an' clarkit [18]
My cash account:
While here, half-mad, half-fed, half-sarkit,[19]
Is a' the amount.

I started, muttering Blockhead! Coof![20]
And heaved on high my waukit loof,[21]
To swear by a' yon starry roof,
Or some rash aith,[22]
That I henceforth would be rhyme-proof
Till my last breath—

When click! the string the snick [23] did draw;
And jee! the door gaed to the wa';
An' by my ingle-lowe I saw,
Now bleezin' [24] bright,
A tight, outlandish hizzie,[25] braw,
Come full in sight.

---

[1] Flail. [2] Live-long. [3] When. [4] Eye.
[5] Within in the sitting apartment. [6] Went. [7] Lonely.
[8] Fireside. [9] Smoke issuing out. [10] Cough-provoking smoke.
[11] The old clay building, or house. [12] Rats. [13] The roof of the house.
[14] Full of motes. [15] Nonsense, idle words. [16] Hearkened.
[17] By this time. [18] Written. [19] Half-shirted.
[20] Fool. [21] My palm thickened (with labour). [22] Oath.
[23] Latch. [24] Blazing. [25] Hussy.

Ye need na doubt I held my whisht ;[1]
The infant aith, half-formed, was crushed ;
I glowr'd as eerie 's I 'd been dushed [2]
In some wild glen ;
When sweet, like modest worth, she blushed
And steppit ben.[3]

Green, slender, leaf-clad holly boughs
Were twisted, gracefu', round her brows ;
I took her for some Scottish Muse
By that same token ;
An' come to stop those reckless vows
Would soon been [4] broken.

A hair-brained, sentimental trace
Was strongly marked in her face ;
A wildly witty, rustic grace
Shone full upon her ;
Her eye, even turned on empty space,
Beamed keen with honour.

. . . . . .

With musing, deep, astonished stare,
I viewed the heavenly-seeming fair ;
A whispering throb did witness bear
Of kindred sweet :
When, with an elder sister's air,
She did me greet :—

"All hail ! my own inspired bard !
In me thy native Muse regard !
Nor longer mourn thy fate is hard,
Thus poorly low !
I come to give thee such reward
As we bestow.

"Know the great Genius of this land
Has many a light aërial band,
Who, all beneath his high command,
Harmoniously,
As arts or arms they understand,
Their labours ply.

. . . . . .

---

[1] Silence.
[2] I stared as frightened as if I had been attacked by a butting ram.
[3] Walked into the room.
[4] Which would soon have been.

"Of these am I—Coila my name;
And this district as mine I claim,
Where once the Campbells, chiefs of fame,
Held ruling power:—
I marked thy embryo tuneful flame
Thy natal hour.

"With future hope I oft would gaze
Fond on thy little early ways,
Thy rudely carolled chiming phrase
In uncouth rhymes,
Fired at the simple, artless lays
Of other times.

"I saw thee seek the sounding shore,
Delighted with the dashing roar;
Or, when the North his fleecy store
Drove through the sky,
I saw grim nature's visage hoar
Struck thy young eye.

"Or, when the deep-green-mantled earth
Warm cherished every floweret's birth,
And joy and music pouring forth
In every grove,
I saw thee eye the general mirth
With boundless love.

"When ripened fields and azure skies
Called forth the reapers' rustling noise
I saw thee leave their evening joys,
And lonely stalk
To vent thy bosom's swelling rise
In pensive walk.

"When youthful love, warm-blushing, strong,
Keen-shivering shot thy nerves along,
Those accents, grateful to thy tongue,
The adored name,
I taught thee how to pour in song,
To soothe thy flame.

"I saw thy pulse's maddening play
Wild send thee pleasure's devious way,
Misled by fancy's meteor ray,
By passion driven;
But yet the light that led astray
Was light from heaven.

. . . . . .

"To give my counsels all in one,
Thy tuneful flame still careful fan;
Preserve the dignity of man
With soul erect;
And trust the universal plan
Will all protect.

"And wear thou this"—she solemn said,
And bound the holly round my head:
The polished leaves and berries red
Did rustling play;
And, like a passing thought, she fled
In light away.

Here again, in another style, is something, which, although not very poetical, is, we think, very striking. Burns himself has spoken of it as a "wild rhapsody, miserably deficient in versification;" "but," it is added, "as the sentiments are the genuine feelings of my heart, for that reason I have a particular pleasure in conning it over:"—

My father was a farmer upon the Carrick border, O;
And carefully he bred me in decency and order, O;
He bade me act a manly part, though I had ne'er a farthing, O;
For without an honest manly heart no man was worth regarding, O.

Then out into the world my course I did determine, O;
Though to be rich was not my wish, yet to be great was charming, O;
My talents they were not the worst, nor yet my education, O;
Resolved was I at least to try to mend my situation, O.

In many a way, and vain essay, I courted fortune's favour, O;
Some cause unseen still stept between to frustrate each endeavour, O;
Sometimes by foes I was o'erpowered, sometimes by friends forsaken, O;
And when my hope was at the top I still was worst mistaken, O.

Then sore harassed, and tired at last, with fortune's vain delusion, O,
I dropt my schemes, like idle dreams, and came to this conclusion, O:—
The past was bad, the future hid—its good or ill untried, O;
But the present hour was in my power, and so I would enjoy it, O.

No help, nor hope, nor view had I, nor person to befriend me, O;
So I must toil, and sweat and broil, and labour to sustain me, O;
To plough and sow, to reap and mow, my father bred me early, O;
For one, he said, to labour bred was a match for fortune fairly, O.

Thus all obscure, unknown, and poor, through life I 'm doomed to wander, O,
Till down my weary bones I lay in everlasting slumber, O;
No view nor care, but shun whate'er might breed me pain or sorrow, O,
I live to-day as well 's I may, regardless of to-morrow, O.

But, cheerful still, I am as well as a monarch in a palace, O,
Though fortune's frown still hunts me down with all her wonted malice, O:
I make, indeed, my daily bread, but ne'er can make it farther, O;
But, as daily bread is all I need, I do not much regard her, O.

When sometimes by my labour I earn a little money, O,
Some unforeseen misfortune comes generally upon me, O;
Mischance, mistake, or by neglect, or my good-natured folly, O;
But, come what will, I've sworn it still I 'll ne'er be melancholy, O.

All you who follow wealth and power with unremitting ardour, O,
The more in this you look for bliss you leave your views the farther, O:
Had you the wealth Potosi boasts, or nations to adore you, O,
A cheerful honest-hearted clown I will prefer before you, O.'

These extracts, as extracts in every case must be, are only indications or hints of what is to be found in the body of poetry from which they are taken; and in this instance, from various causes, the impression so conveyed may probably be more than usually inadequate—for the strangeness of the dialect must veil much of the effect to an English reader, even when the general sense is apprehended; and, besides, their length, their peculiarly Scottish spirit and character, and other considerations have prevented us from quoting the most successful of Burns's pieces in some of the styles in which he most excelled. But still what we have transcribed may serve to give a more extended and a truer notion of what his poetry really is than is commonly entertained by strangers, among whom he is mostly known and judged of from two or three of his compositions, which perhaps of all that he has produced are the least marked by the peculiar character of his genius. Even out of his own country, his Songs, to be sure, have taken all hearts—and they are the very flame-breath of his own. No truer poetry exists in any language, or in any form. But it is the poetry of the heart much more than of either the head or the imagination. Burns's songs do not at all resemble the exquisite lyrical snatches with which Shakespeare, and also Beaumont and Fletcher, have sprinkled some of their dramas—enlivening the busy scene and progress of the action as the progress of the wayfarer is enlivened by the voices of birds in the hedgerows, or the sight and scent of wild-flowers that have sprung up by the road-side. They are never in any respect exercises of ingenuity, but always utterances of passion, and simple and direct as a shout of laughter or a gush of tears. Whatever they have of fancy, whatever they have of melody, is

born of real emotion—is merely the natural expression of the poet's feeling at the moment, seeking and finding vent in musical words. Since "burning Sappho" loved and sung in the old isles of Greece, not much poetry has been produced so thrillingly tender as some of the best of these songs. Here, for example, is one, rude enough perhaps in language and versification,—but every line, every cadence is steeped in pathos:—

Ye banks, and braes, and streams around
The castle o' Montgomery,
Green be your woods, and fair your flowers,
Your waters never drumlie![1]
There summer first unfauld her robes,
And there the langest tarry!
For there I took the last farewell
O' my sweet Highland Mary.

How sweetly bloomed the gay green birk,[2]
How rich the hawthorn's blossom,
As underneath their fragrant shade
I clasp'd her to my bosom!
The golden hours on angel wings
Flew o'er me and my dearie;
For dear to me as light and life
Was my sweet Highland Mary.

Wi' mony a vow and locked embrace
Our parting was fu' tender;
And, pledging aft to meet again,
We tore oursels asunder;
But oh! fell death's untimely frost,
That nipt my flower sae early!
Now green's the sod, and cauld 's the clay,
That wraps my Highland Mary!

O pale, pale now those rosy lips
I aft hae kissed sae fondly!
And closed for aye the sparkling glance
That dwelt on me sae kindly!
And mouldering now in silent dust
That heart that lo'ed[3] me dearly!
But still within my bosom's core
Shall live my Highland Mary.

These compositions are so universally known, that it is needless to give any others at full length; but we may throw to-

[1] Turbid with mud. [2] Birch. [3] Loved.

gether a few verses and half-verses gathered from several of them:—

When o'er the hill the eastern star
Tells bughtin'[1] time is near, my joe;
And owsen[2] frae the furrowed field
Return sae dowf[3] and weary, O;
Down by the burn, where scented birks
Wi' dew are hanging clear, my joe,
I'll meet thee on the lea-rig,[4]
My ain[5] kind dearie, O.

In mirkest[6] glen, at midnight hour,
I 'd rove, and ne'er be eerie,[7] O,
If through that glen I gaed[8] to thee,
My ain kind dearie, O.
Although the night were ne'er sae wild,
And I were ne'er sae weary, O,
I'd meet thee on the lea-rig,
My ain kind dearie, O.

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

I hae sworn by the heavens to my Mary,
I hae sworn by the heavens to be true;
And sae may the heavens forget me,
When I forget my vow!

O plight me your faith, my Mary,
And plight me your lily-white hand;
O plight me your faith, my Mary,
Before I leave Scotia's strand.

We hae plighted our troth, my Mary,
In mutual affection to join;
And cursed be the cause that shall part us!
The hour, and the moment o' time!

O poortith[9] cauld, and restless love,
Ye wreck my peace between ye;
Yet poortith a' I could forgive,
An' 'twere na for my Jeanie.

---

[1] Folding. [2] Oxen. [3] Dull, spiritless.
[4] Grassy ridge. [5] Own. [6] Darkest.
[7] Frightened by dread of spirits. [8] Went. [9] Poverty.

O why should fate sic[1] pleasure have
Life's dearest bands untwining?
Or why sae sweet a flower as love
Depend on fortune's shining?

. . . . . .

. . . . . .

To thy bosom lay my heart,
There to throb and languish;
Though despair had wrung its core,
That would heal its anguish.

Take away those rosy lips,
Rich with balmy treasure:
Turn away thine eyes of love,
Lest I die with pleasure.

. . . . . .

Here's a health to ane I lo'e dear,
Here's a health to ane I lo'e dear;
Thou art sweet as the smile when fond lovers meet,
And soft as their parting tear, Jessy!

Although thou maun[2] never be mine,
Although even hope is denied,
'Tis sweeter for thee despairing
Than aught in the world beside, Jessy!

. . . . . .

Ae[3] fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!

. . . . . .

Had we never loved sae kindly,
Had we never loved sae blindly,
Never met, or never parted,
We had ne'er been broken-hearted.

---

[1] Such. [2] Must. [3] One.

Fare thee weel, thou first and fairest!
Fare thee weel, thou best and dearest!

. . . . . .

Ae fond kiss, and then we sever;
Ae fareweel, alas, for ever!

. . . . . .

In all, indeed, that he has written best, Burns may be said to have given us himself,—the passion or sentiment which swayed or possessed him at the moment,—almost as much as in his songs. In him the poet was the same as the man. He could describe with admirable fidelity and force incidents, scenes, manners, characters, or whatever else, which had fallen within his experience or observation; but he had little proper dramatic imagination, or power of going out of himself into other natures, and, as it were, losing his personality in the creations of his fancy. His blood was too hot, his pulse beat too tumultuously, for that; at least he was during his short life too much the sport both of his own passions and of many other stormy influences to acquire such power of intellectual self-command and self-suppression. What he might have attained to if a longer earthly existence had been granted to him—or a less tempestuous one—who shall say? Both when his genius first blazed out upon the world, and when its light was quenched by death, it seemed as if he had been born or designed to do much more than he had done. Having written what he wrote before his twenty-seventh year, he had doubtless much more additional poetry in him than he gave forth between that date and his death at the age of thirty-seven—poetry which might now have been the world's for ever if that age had been worthy of such a gift of heaven as its glorious poet—if it had not treated him rather like an untameable howling hyæna, that required to be caged and chained, if not absolutely suffocated at once, than as a spirit of divinest song. Never surely did men so put a bushel upon the light, first to hide and at last to extinguish it. As it is, however, the influence of the poetry of Burns upon the popular mind of Scotland must have been immense. And we believe it has been all for good—enlarging, elevating, and refining the national heart, as well as awakening it. The tendency of some things, both in the character of the people and in their peculiar institutions, required

such a check or counteraction as was supplied by this frank, generous, reckless poetry, springing so singularly out of the ironbound Calvinistic Presbyterianism of the country, like the flowing water from the rock in Horeb. What would not such a poet as Burns be worth to the people of the United States of America, if he were to arise among them at this moment? It would be as good as another Declaration of Independence. Nay, what would not such a popular poetry as his be worth in any country to any people? There is no people whom it would not help to sustain in whatever nobleness of character belonged to them, if it did not more ennoble them. For, whatever there may be to be disapproved of in the licence or indecorum of some things that Burns has written, there is at least nothing mean-souled in his poetry, any more than there was in the man. It is never for a moment even vulgar or low in expression or manner: it is wonderful how a native delicacy of taste and elevation of spirit in the poet have sustained him here, with a dialect so soiled by illiterate lips, and often the most perilous subject. Burns, the peasant, is perhaps the only modern writer of Scotch (not excepting even Sir Walter Scott) who has written it uniformly like a gentleman. Not that his language is not sometimes strong or bold enough, and even, on two or three occasions coarse; but these momentary outbreaks of a wild levity have never anything in them that can be called base or creeping. On the other hand, some of the most tremulously passionate of his pieces are models of refinement of style. And such as is the poetry of Burns was his life. Even his faults of character and errors of conduct were those of a high nature; and on the whole were more really estimable, as well as more loveable, than the virtues of most other people. Misled he often was, as he has himself said in one of the pieces we have transcribed above—

> "Misled by fancy's meteor-ray,
> By passion driven;
> But yet the light that led astray
> Was light from heaven."

Remaining Literature of the Eighteenth Century.

The remaining literature of the closing portion of the eighteenth century may be very summarily dismissed. This was an age of popular song in England, as well as in Scotland: while Burns was in the last years of his life enriching Thomson's Collection of Original Scottish Airs, and Johnson's Musical Museum with words for the old melodies of his country that have become a part of the being of every Scotsman, Charles Dibdin, like another Tyrtaeus, was putting new patriotism into every English heart by his inspiriting strains—some of the best of which Tyrtaeus never matched. Dibdin, who, besides his songs, wrote many pieces for the stage, survived till 1814, when he died about the age of seventy.

In prose literature, although there was book-making enough, not much that has proved enduring was done in England during the last decade and a half of the eighteenth century, at least if we except a few works produced by one or two of the great writers of the preceding time who have been already noticed—such, for instance, as the three last volumes of Gibbon's History, published in 1788, and Burke's Reflections and other writings, chiefly on the subject of the French Revolution, which appeared between 1790 and his death in 1797. We may also mention here the publication in 1798, in five volumes 4to., of the first collected edition of the Works of Horace Walpole, comprising, along with other novelties, a volume of his always lively and entertaining and often brilliant Letters, the portion of his writings upon which his fame is probably destined chiefly to rest. His Memoirs of the Last Ten Years of the Reign of George II., in two quarto volumes, were not given to the world till 1822; and their continuation, his Memoirs of the Reign of George III., only appeared in 1844-5.

In the Drama, with activity enough among a crowd of writers, very little was produced in this period that retains its place in our literature. Mrs. Inchbald, Thomas Holcroft, Thomas Morton, John O'Keefe, Charles Dibdin, and George Colman the Younger (already mentioned), Francis Reynolds, and Joseph George Holman were the principal writers who supplied the theatres with new pieces; and Holcroft's Road to Ruin (1792),

Morton's Speed the Plough (1798), Mrs. Inchbald's Wives as they Were and Maids as they Are (1797), and Colman's Sylvester Daggerwood, originally entitled New Hay at the Old Market (1795), are all of more or less merit, and retain some popularity. No great comedy however belongs to this time. The tragedies produced were such as Madame d'Arblay's Edwy and Elgiva, brought out at Drury Lane in 1795, but never printed; Arthur Murphy's Arminius (1798), &c.

In the department of fictitious narrative there was more to boast of. William Godwin, already distinguished by his Enquiry concerning Political Justice, made a great sensation in 1794 by his novel of Things as they Are, or the Adventures of Caleb Williams, a remarkable example, certainly, of what can be done to give verisimilitude to the improbable by mere earnestness and vehemence of narration; and in 1799 the same writer achieved perhaps a still greater triumph by a different application of the same kind of power, in his St. Leon, in which even the supernatural and impossible are invested with the strongest likeness to truth and reality. To her Evelina and Cecilia Miss Frances Burney (now Madame d'Arblay) added her Camilla in 1796. Mrs. Radcliffe (originally Miss Ann Ward) produced within this period her Romance of the Forest and her Mysteries of Udolpho; Mrs. Charlotte Smith (originally Miss Turner) her Romance of Real Life, and several other novels, all of superior merit; Dr. John Moore his Zeluco, his Edward, and his Mordaunt; Mrs. Inchbald, her Simple Story (in 1791).

In History, if we except the conclusion of Gibbon's Decline and Fall, no work that has any pretensions to be accounted classical was added to our literature. The first edition of Mitford's History of Greece was published in 1784; another History of Ancient Greece, in two volumes quarto, by Dr. John Gillies, who afterwards succeeded Dr. Robertson as Royal Historiographer for Scotland, appeared in 1786 (to which a continuation and completion in two more quartos was added in 1820); John Pinkerton published his Dissertation on the Scythians or Goths in 1787, his Inquiry into the History of Scotland preceding the Reign of Malcolm III. (forming an introduction to Lord Hailes's Annals) in 1789, and his History of Scotland from the Accession of the House of Stuart to that of Mary (filling up the interval between Hailes and Robertson) in 1797; all works of research and ingenuity, but of no merit as pieces of composition. The

Rev. John Whitaker, who had previously made himself known by his History of Manchester, and his Genuine History of the Britons Asserted, published his Mary Queen of Scots Vindicated in 1787; and many minutiæ of the national antiquities were illustrated, in the Archæologia or in separate publications, by Gough, the editor of Camden's Britannia, Dr. Samuel Pegge, and other patient and laborious inquirers. In Biography, historical and literary, besides Boswell's great work, The Life of Samuel Johnson, which first appeared, in two quarto volumes, in 1790, there was Mr. Roscoe's elegant Life of Lorenzo de' Medici, published in 1795. The same writer's Life and Pontificate of Leo X. did not appear till 1805.

Of criticism and commentatorship of all kinds there was abundance. At least a brilliant beginning was made in the study of the literature of India and other Eastern countries by a few adventurous inquirers, led by Sir William Jones, whose French version of the Life of Nadir Shah from the Persian appeared in 1770; his Persian Grammar in 1771; his Six Books of Commentaries, in Latin, on the Persian Poetry, in 1774; his translation of the Moallakat from the Arabic in 1783; his translation of the Sanscrit drama of Sacontala in 1790; his translation of the Ordinances of Menu in 1794; and his various disquisitions on the languages, learning, and history of the Oriental nations, printed in the Asiatic Researches, in the early volumes of that publication, begun in 1788. Jones also, besides his poetry already mentioned, and his Essay on the Law of Bailments and one or two other professional tracts, had in 1779 published a translation of the Speeches of Isaeus from the Greek. Other translations from the ancient languages published during this period were that of Aristotle's Treatise on Poetry by Pye (afterwards poet laureate) in 1788, that of the same work by the Rev. Thomas Twining in 1789, that of Aristotle's Ethics and Politics by Dr. Gillies in 1797, and that of the works of Tacitus by Arthur Murphy in 1793. Harris's Hermes, or a Philosophical Enquiry concerning Language and Universal Grammar, had appeared in 1757; the first volume of Lord Monboddo's Dissertation on the Origin and Progress of Language in 1774: but it was not till the year 1792 that the sixth and last volume of the latter saw the light. Meanwhile, the first part of what has proved a much more influential work, Horne Tooke's celebrated Diversions of Purley, appeared in 1786 in an octavo volume, afterwards ex-

panded into a quarto, to which a second was added in 1805. The germ of his system, however, had been stated by Tooke in his Letter to Mr. Dunning, published in 1778. In Latin scholarship, the most remarkable production of this date was perhaps the edition of the rare work (originally published at Paris in 1615) of the Scottish writer William Bellenden, or Bellendenus, entitled De Statu, which appeared anonymously in 1787, with a long and eloquent Latin Preface, loud in its advocacy of the Whig politics and laudation of the Whig leaders of the day, now known to be the composition of the Rev. Dr. Samuel Parr, who had already some years before announced himself in a sermon published under the name of Phileleutherus Norfolciencis, and was for nearly forty years after this date to continue to make considerable noise in the literary world as theologian, critic, Philopatris Varvicencis (Warwickshire Patriot), &c. Parr was assisted in the preparation of his edition of Bellendenus by his friend Henry Homer, who published some good editions of Horace, Cæsar, and other Latin authors, but died at an early age in 1791. Another reverend politician and classical scholar of this day was Gilbert Wakefield, who, being a dissenter, carried his liberalism both in politics and in divinity considerably farther than Dr. Parr, and was, from his twentieth year till his death in 1801, at the age of forty-five, one of the most restless of writers upon all sorts of subjects. Wakefield published an edition of Virgil's Georgics in 1788; his Silva Critica (a miscellany of Latin notes upon the Sacred Scriptures and other ancient writings) in 1789; and a complete translation of the New Testament in 1792; but his reputation as a scholar, whatever it may be, rests principally upon his work of greatest pretension, his collated and annotated edition of Lucretius, published in 1796 and 1797. He also gave to the world editions of several Greek tragedies, of Bion and Moschus, of Horace, and of Virgil; and among his numerous original works are an unfinished Inquiry into the Opinions of the Fathers concerning the Person of Christ, an Answer to Paine's Age of Reason, a Reply to (Watson) the Bishop of Llandaff's Address to the People of Great Britain (for the publication of which, in 1798, he was brought to trial by the government, and, being convicted of a seditious libel, was imprisoned for two years in Dorchester gaol), and his Memoirs of his Own Life, first published in 1795. His Correspondence with Charles Fox was printed after his death.

The excellent edition of Aristotle's Treatise on Poetry, which had been prepared by Thomas Tyrwhitt, the admirable editor of Chaucer, before his death in 1786, was brought out at Oxford, from the Clarendon press, in 1794. The reputation of Richard Porson, who had already given proof of his unrivalled acuteness in his Letters to Archdeacon Travis on the subject of the controverted passage about the three witnesses in the First Epistle of John, published in 1790, and who, in a mastery of the Greek language at once extensive and exact, is admitted to have had few superiors among modern scholars, was crowned by his edition in 1795 of the Hecuba of Euripides, followed by those of the Orestes, Phœnissæ, and Medea. Porson, upon whom the mantle of the great Bentley seemed to have descended, and who might perhaps have left a name as illustrious as his if unfortunate habits of life had not wasted as well as probably shortened his days, died at the age of forty-nine in 1808. Other active labourers during this period in the department of classical scholarship were Dr. Thomas Randolph, who died Bishop of London in 1813; Dr. Thomas Burgess, Bishop of Salisbury; and Dr. Herbert Marsh, Bishop of Peterborough, whose varied acquirements and literary performances embraced politics, theology, and German and Oriental learning, as well as Greek and Latin. The last thirty or forty years of the eighteenth century formed, moreover, the great age of commentatorship upon Shakespeare, and also upon some other portions of our old poetry. Dr. Johnson's first edition of Shakespeare, in eight volumes, appeared in 1765; George Steevens's edition of the Twenty Old Quartos, in four volumes, in 1766; Edward Capel's edition of all the Plays, in ten volumes, in 1768, but his Notes, in three volumes quarto, not till 1783, two years after the author's death; Sir Thomas Hanmer's, in six quartos, in 1771; that by Johnson and Steevens, in ten octavos, in 1773; their second edition in 1778; the Supplement to that edition by Edmund Malone, in two volumes, in 1780; Isaac Reed's first edition (sometimes called the third edition of Johnson and Steevens) in 1786; Malone's first edition, in ten volumes, in 1790:—which were followed by Isaac Reed's second edition, in twenty-one volumes, in 1803; Malone's second, in sixteen volumes, in 1816; and Malone's and Boswell's, in twenty-one volumes, now regarded as the standard Variorum edition, in 1821. We have already mentioned the two volumes on Ireland's forgeries (to the second of which, it may be

here stated, an Appendix was added in 1800), published by George Chalmers, the laborious author of many other works, generally written in the most fantastic style, on finance, economical science, and the politics of the day, as well as of various historical and antiquarian compilations, the most important of which, however, his Life of Mary Queen of Scots, and his Caledonia (unfinished), were not published till after the commencement of the present century, as well as the editor of Allan Ramsay, Sir David Lyndsay, and others of our old poets. Following, also, in the path struck out by Warton and Percy, John Pinkerton, Joseph Ritson, David Macpherson, George Ellis, and others investigated, with more or less learning and acuteness, the history of our early poetry, or edited different portions of it.

In Moral Speculation, political, philosophical, and theological, among the principal names belonging to this age of our literature are (besides Burke), Paine, Godwin, Mary Wolstonecraft, Paley, Bishops Watson, Horsley, and Porteus, Priestley, Price, Dr. Geddes, Dr. Campbell of Aberdeen, Dr. MacKnight of Edinburgh, Dr. Blair, &c. Of Thomas Paine's three dexterous and smartly-written works, the first, his Common Sense, was published in 1776; the next, his Rights of Man, in 1791-2; the last, his Age of Reason, in 1794-5. Mary Wolstonecraft's more declamatory Vindication of the Rights of Women came forth immediately after the First Part of Paine's Rights of Man—not unlike the hollow but imposing thunder of the artillery following the flash. Godwin's more systematic exposition of the new philosophy (not destined ever to grow old), his Enquiry concerning Political Justice, and its Influence on general Virtue and Happiness, appeared in 1793. Bishop Watson, who, besides five volumes of Chemical Essays and a variety of charges, sermons, addresses, and other occasional publications, had defended the cause of religion against the subtle learning of Gibbon in his Apology for Christianity in 1776, twenty years later wrote his Apology for the Bible in answer to the bold ignorance of Paine. All these performances, however, attacks and defences alike, having served each its temporary purpose, are already passed, or are fast passing, away into forgetfulness. Not so with Archdeacon Paley's works: his elements of Moral and Political Philosophy, published in 1785; his Horæ Paulinæ, in 1790; his View of the Evidence of Christianity, in 1794; and his Natural Theology, in 1802—all of which are characterised by a mature-

ness in the conception, and a care and sterling ability in the execution, that will make it long before they are superseded. Finally, we ought not to omit to notice that the first edition of Mr. Malthus's celebrated Essay on the Principle of Population was published in 1798 in an octavo volume, although this original exposition of the new doctrine is charged with having differed not more in size than it did in substance from that given in the next edition of the work, which, expanded into a quarto, appeared in 1803.

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY.

It might almost seem as if there were something in the impressiveness of the great chronological event formed by the termination of one century and the commencement of another that had been wont to act with an awakening and fructifying power upon literary genius in these islands. Of the three last great sunbursts of our literature, the first, making what has been called the Elizabethan age of our dramatic and other poetry, threw its splendour over the last quarter of the sixteenth and the first of the seventeenth century; the second, famous as the Augustan age of Anne, brightened the earlier years of the eighteenth; the nineteenth century was ushered in by the third. At the termination of the reign of George III., in the year 1820, there were still among us, not to mention minor names, at least nine or ten poetical writers, each (whatever discordance of opinion there might be about either their relative or their absolute merits) commanding universal attention from the reading world to whatever he produced:—Crabbe (to take them in the order of their seniority), Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, Scott, Campbell, Moore, Byron, Shelley, and perhaps we ought to add Keats, though more for the shining promise of his great but immature genius than for what he had actually done. Many other voices there were from which divine words were often heard, but these were oracles to whom all listened, whose inspiration all men acknowledged. It is such crowding and clustering of remarkable writers that has chiefly distinguished the great literary ages in every country: there are eminent writers at other times, but they come singly or in small numbers, as Lucretius, the noblest of the Latin poets, did before the Augustan age of Roman literature; as our own Milton and Dryden did in the interval between our Elizabethan age and that of Anne; as Goldsmith, and Burke, and Johnson, and then Cowper,

and Burns, in twos and threes, or one by one, preceded and as it were led in the rush and crush of our last revival. For such single swallows, though they do not make, do yet commonly herald the summer; and accordingly those remarkable writers who have thus appeared between one great age of literature and another have mostly, it may be observed, arisen not in the earlier but in the later portion of the interval—have been not the lagging successors of the last era, but the precursors of the next. However the fact is to be explained or accounted for, it does indeed look as if Nature in this, as in other things, had her times of production and of comparative rest and inactivity—her autumns and her winters—or, as we may otherwise conceive it, her alternations of light and darkness, of day and night. After a busy and brilliant period of usually some thirty or forty years, there has always followed in every country a long term during which the literary spirit, as if overworked and exhausted, has manifested little real energy or power of life, and even the very demand and taste for the highest kind of literature, for depth, and subtlety, and truth, and originality, and passion, and beauty, has in a great measure ceased with the supply—a sober and slumbrous twilight of imitation and mediocrity, and little more than mechanical dexterity in bookmaking, at least with the generality of the most popular and applauded writers.

After all, the reawakening of our English literature, on each of the three occasions we have mentioned, was probably brought about mainly by the general political and social circumstances of the country and of the world at the time. The poetical and dramatic wealth and magnificence of the era of Elizabeth and James came, no doubt, for the most part, out of the passions that had been stirred and the strength that had been acquired in the mighty contests and convulsions which filled, here and throughout Europe, the middle of the sixteenth century; another breaking up of old institutions and re-edification of the state upon a new foundation and a new principle, the work of the last sixty years of the seventeenth century, if it did not contribute much to train the wits and fine writers of the age of Anne, at least both prepared the tranquillity necessary for the restoration of elegant literature, and disposed the public mind for its enjoyment; the poetical dayspring, finally, that came with our own century was born with, and probably in some degree out of, a third revolution, which shook both established institutions and

the minds and opinions of men throughout Europe as much almost as the Reformation itself had done three centuries and a half before. It is also to be observed that on each of these three occasions the excitement appears to have come to us in part from a foreign literature which had undergone a similar reawakening, or put forth a new life and vigour, shortly before our own: in the Elizabethan age the contagion or impulse was caught from the literature of Italy; in the age of Anne from that of France; in the present period from that of Germany.

THE LAST AGE OF THE GEORGES.

WORDSWORTH.

This German inspiration operated most directly, and produced the most marked effect, in the poetry of Wordsworth. Wordsworth, who was born in 1770, has preserved in the editions of his collected works some of his verses written so long ago as 1786; and he also continued to the last to reprint the two earliest of his published poems, entitled An Evening Walk, addressed to a Young Lady, from the Lakes of the North of England, and Descriptive Sketches, taken during a pedestrian tour among the Alps, both of which first appeared in 1793. The recollection of the former of these poems probably suggested to somebody, a few years later, the otherwise not very intelligible designation of the Lake School, which has been applied to this writer and his imitators, or supposed imitators. But the Evening Walk and the Descriptive Sketches, which are both written in the usual rhyming ten-syllabled verse, are perfectly orthodox poems, according to the common creed, in spirit, manner, and form. The peculiarities which are conceived to constitute what is called the Lake manner first appeared in the Lyrical Ballads; the first volume of which was published in 1798, the second in 1800.

In the Preface to the second volume of the Lyrical Ballads, the author himself described his object as being to ascertain how far the purposes of poetry might be fulfilled "by fitting to metrical arrangement a selection of the real language of men in a state of vivid sensation." It might, perhaps, be possible to defend this notion by the aid of certain assumptions as to what is implied in, or to be understood by, a state of vivid sensation, which it may

be contended is only another phrase for a state of poetical excitement: undoubtedly the language of a mind in such a state, selected, or corrected, and made metrical, will be poetry. It is almost a truism to say so. Nay, we might go farther, and assert that, in the circumstances supposed, the selection and the adaptation to metrical arrangement would not be necessary; the language would flow naturally into something of a musical shape (that being one of the conditions of poetical expression), and, although it might be improved by correction, it would have all the essentials of poetry as it was originally produced. But what is evidently meant is, that the real or natural language of any and every mind when simply in a state of excitement or passion is necessarily poetical. The respect in which the doctrine differs from that commonly held is, that it assumes mere passion or vivid sensation to be in all men and in all cases substantially identical with poetical excitement, and the language in which passion expresses itself to be consequently always poetry, at least after it has undergone some purification or pruning, and been reduced to metrical regularity. As for this qualification, we may remark that it must be understood to mean nothing more than that the language of passion is improved with reference to poetical effect by being thus trained and regulated: otherwise the statement would be contradictory and would refute itself; for, if passion, or vivid sensation, always speaks in poetry, the metrical arrangement and the selection are unnecessary and unwarrantable; if these operations be indispensable, the language of vivid sensation is not always poetry. But surely it is evident from the nature of the thing that it is altogether a misconception of what poetry is to conceive it to be nothing more than the language naturally prompted by passion or strong emotion. If that were all, all men, all women, and all children would be poets. Poetry, in the first place, is an art, just as painting is an art; and the one is no more to be practised solely under the guidance of strong emotion than the other. Secondly, poetical emotion is something as distinct from mere ordinary passion or excitement as is musical emotion, or the feeling of the picturesque or the beautiful or the grand in painting or in architecture; the one may and often does exist where there exists nothing of the other. Nobody has ever thought of defining music to be merely the natural vocal utterance of men in a state of vivid sensation, or painting to be nothing more than their natural way of expressing themselves when in

such a state by lines and colours: no more is poetry simply their real language, or expression by words, when in such a state. It makes no difference that words are a mode of expression of which men have much more generally the use than they have the use of either colours or musical sounds; if all men could sing or could handle the brush, they still would not all be musicians and painters whenever they were in a passion.

It is true that even in the rudest minds emotion will tend to make the expression more vivid and forcible; but it will not for all that necessarily rise to poetry. Emotion or excitement alone will not produce that idealization in which poetry consists. To have that effect the excitement must be of a peculiar character, and the mind in which it takes place must be peculiarly gifted. The mistake has probably arisen from a confusion of two things which are widely different—the real language of men in a state of excitement, and the imaginative imitation of such language in the artistic delineation of the excitement. The latter alone will necessarily or universally be poetical; the former may be the veriest of prose. It may be said, indeed, that it is not men's real language, but the imitation of it, which is meant to be called poetry by Wordsworth and his followers—that, of course, their own poetry, even when most conformable to their own theory, can only consist of what *they conceive* would be the real language of persons placed in the circumstances of those from whom it professes to proceed. But this explanation, besides that it leaves the theory we are examining, considered as an account or definition of poetry, as narrow and defective as ever, still assumes that poetical imitation is nothing more than transcription, or its equivalent—such invention as comes as near as possible to what literal transcription would be; which is the very misapprehension against which we are arguing. It is equally false, we contend, to say that poetry is nothing more than either the real language of men in a state of excitement, or the mere imitation, the closer the better, of that real language. The imitation must be an idealized imitation—an intermingling of the poet with his subject by which it receives a new character; just as, in painting, a great portrait, or other picture from nature, is never a fac-simile copy, but always as much a reflection from the artist's own spirit as from the scene or object it represents. The realm of nature and the realm of art, although counterparts, are nevertheless altogether distinct the one from

the other; and both painting and poetry belong to the latter, not to the former.

We cannot say that Wordsworth's theory of poetry has been altogether without effect upon his practice, but it has shown itself rather by some deficiency of refinement in his general manner than by very much that he has written in express conformity with its requisitions. We might affirm, indeed, that its principle is as much contradicted and confuted by the greater part of his own poetry as it is by that of all languages and all times in which poetry has been written, or by the universal past experience of mankind in every age and country. He is a great poet, and has enriched our literature with much beautiful and noble writing, whatever be the method or principle upon which he constructs, or fancies that he constructs, his compositions. His Laodamia, without the exception of a single line, his Lonely Leech-gatherer, with the exception of very few lines; his Ruth, his Tintern Abbey, his Feast of Brougham, the Water Lily, the greater part of the Excursion, most of the Sonnets, his great Ode on the Intimations of Immortality in Early Childhood, and many of his shorter lyrical pieces, are nearly as unexceptionable in diction as they are deep and true in feeling, judged according to any rules or principles of art that are now patronized by anybody. It is true, indeed, that it will not do to look at anything that Wordsworth has written through the spectacles of that species of criticism which was in vogue among us in the last century; we believe that in several of the pieces we have named even that narrow and superficial doctrine (if it could be recalled from the tomb) would find little or nothing to object to, but we fear it would find as little to admire; it had no feeling or understanding of the poetry of any other era than its own,—neither of that of Homer, nor that of the Greek dramatists, nor that of our own Elizabethan age,—and it certainly would not enter far into the spirit either of that of Wordsworth or of any of his eminent contemporaries or successors. It is part, and a great part, of what the literature of Germany has done for us within the last sixty years, that it has given a wider scope and a deeper insight to our perception and mode of judging of the poetical in all its forms and manifestations; and the poetry of Wordsworth has materially aided in establishing this revolution of taste and critical doctrine, by furnishing the English reader with some of the earliest and many of the most successful or most generally

appreciated examples and illustrations of the precepts of the new faith. Even the errors of Wordsworth's poetical creed and practice, the excess to which he has sometimes carried his employment of the language of the uneducated classes, and his attempts to extract poetical effects out of trivial incidents and humble life, were fitted to be rather serviceable than injurious in the highly artificial state of our poetry when he began to write. He may not have succeeded in every instance in which he has tried to glorify the familiar and elevate the low, but he has nevertheless taught us that the domain of poetry is much wider and more various than it used to be deemed, that there is a great deal of it to be found where it was formerly little the fashion to look for anything of the kind, and that the poet does not absolutely require for the exercise of his art and the display of his powers what are commonly called illustrious or distinguished characters, and an otherwise dignified subject, any more than long and learned words. Of all his English contemporaries Wordsworth stands foremost and alone as the poet of common life. It is not his only field, nor perhaps the field in which he is greatest; but it is the one which is most exclusively his own. He has, it is true, no humour or comedy of any kind in him (which is perhaps the explanation of the ludicrous touches that sometimes startle us in his serious poetry), and therefore he is not and seldom attempts to be, what Burns was for his countrymen, the poetic interpreter, and, as such, refiner as well as embalmer, of the wit and merriment of the common people: the writer by whom that title is to be won is yet to arise, and probably from among the people themselves: but of whatever is more tender or more thoughtful in the spirit of ordinary life in England the poetry of Wordsworth is the truest and most comprehensive transcript we possess. Many of his verses, embodying as they do the philosophy as well as the sentiment of this every-day human experience, have a completeness and impressiveness, as of texts, mottoes, proverbs, the force of which is universally felt, and has already worked them into the texture and substance of the language to a far greater extent, we apprehend, than has happened in the case of any contemporary writer.

Wordsworth, though only a few years deceased, for he survived till 1850, nearly sixty years after the publication of his first poetry, is already a classic; and, extensively as he is now read and appreciated, any review of our national literature

would be very incomplete without at least a few extracts from his works illustrative of the various styles in which he has written. As a specimen of what may be called his more peculiar manner, or that which is or used to be more especially understood by the style of the Lake School of poetry, we will begin with the well-known verses entitled The Fountain, a Conversation, which, in his own classification, are included among what he designates Poems of Sentiment and Reflection, and are stated to have been composed in 1799 :—

We walked with open heart, and tongue
  Affectionate and true,
A pair of friends, though I was young,
  And Matthew seventy-two.

We lay beneath a spreading oak,
  Beside a mossy seat;
And from the turf a fountain broke,
  And gurgled at our feet.

"Now, Matthew!" said I, "let us match
  This water's pleasant tune
With some old Border-song, or catch
  That suits a summer's noon;

Or of the church-clock and the chimes
  Sing here, beneath the shade,
That half-mad thing of witty rhymes
  Which you last April made!"

In silence Matthew lay, and eyed
  The spring beneath the tree;
And thus the dear old man replied,
  The grey-haired man of glee:

"No check, no stay, this streamlet fears;
  How merily it goes!
'Twill murmur on a thousand years,
  And flow as now it flows.

And here, on this delightful day,
  I cannot choose but think
How oft, a vigorous man, I lay
  Beside this fountain's brink.

My eyes are dim with childish tears,
  My heart is idly stirred,
For the same sound is in my ears
  Which in those days I heard.

Thus fares it still in our decay:
And yet the wiser mind
Mourns less for what age takes away
Than what it leaves behind.

The blackbird amid leafy trees,
The lark above the hill,
Let loose their carols when they please,
Are quiet when they will.

With nature never do they wage
A foolish strife; they see
A happy youth, and their old age
Is beautiful and free:

But we are pressed by heavy laws;
And often, glad no more,
We wear a face of joy, because
We have been glad of yore.

If there be one who need bemoan
His kindred laid in earth,
The household hearts that were his own,
It is the man of mirth.

My days, my friend, are almost gone,
My life has been approved,
And many love me; but by none
Am I enough beloved."

"Now, both himself and me he wrongs,
The man who thus complains!
I live and sing my idle songs
Upon these happy plains,

And, Matthew, for thy children dead
I'll be a son to thee!"
At this he grasped my hand, and said,
"Alas! that cannot be!"

We rose up from the fountain-side;
And down the smooth descent
Of the green sheep-track did we glide;
And through the wood we went;

And, ere we came to Leonard's Rock,
He sang those witty rhymes
About the crazy old church-clock,
And the bewildered chimes.

The following, entitled The Affliction of Margaret, dated 1804, and classed among the Poems founded on the Affections, is more impassioned, but still essentially in the same style:—

Where art thou, my beloved son,
Where art thou, worse to me than dead?
Oh find me, prosperous or undone!
Or, if the grave be now thy bed,
Why am I ignorant of the same,
That I may rest; and neither blame,
Nor sorrow may attend thy name?

Seven years, alas! to have received
No tidings of an only child;
To have despaired, have hoped, believed,
And been for evermore beguiled;
Sometimes with thoughts of very bliss!
I catch at them, and then I miss;
Was ever darkness like to this?

He was among the prime in worth,
An object beauteous to behold;
Well born, well bred; I sent him forth
Ingenuous, innocent, and bold:
If things ensued that wanted grace,
As hath been said, they were not base;
And never blush was on my face.

Ah! little doth the young one dream,
When full of play and childish cares,
What power is in his wildest scream,
Heard by his mother unawares!
He knows it not, he cannot guess:
Years to a mother bring distress;
But do not make her love the less.

Neglect me! no, I suffered long
From that ill thought; and, being blind,
Said, "Pride shall help me in my wrong:
Kind mother have I been, as kind
As ever breathed:" and that is true;
I've wet my path with tears like dew,
Weeping for him when no one knew.

My son, if thou be humbled, poor,
Hopeless of honour and of gain,
Oh! do not dread thy mother's door;
Think not of me with grief and pain:

I now can see with better eyes;
And worldly grandeur I despise,
And Fortune with her gifts and lies.

Alas! the fowls of heaven have wings,
And blasts of heaven will aid their flight;
They mount—how short a voyage brings
The wanderers back to their delight!
Chains tie us down by land and sea;
And wishes, vain as mine, may be
All that is left to comfort thee.

Perhaps some dungeon hears thee groan,
Maimed, mangled, by inhuman men;
Or thou, upon a desert thrown,
Inherit'st the lion's den;
Or hast been summoned to the deep,
Thou, thou and all thy mates, to keep
An incommunicable sleep.

I look for ghosts; but none will force
Their way to me:—'tis falsely said
That there was ever intercourse
Between the living and the dead;
For, surely, then I should have sight
Of him I wait for day and night
With love and longings infinite.

My apprehensions come in crowds;
I dread the rustling of the grass;
The very shadows of the clouds
Have power to shake me as they pass;
I question things, and do not find
One that will answer to my mind;
And all the world appears unkind.

Beyond participation lie
My troubles, and beyond relief:
If any chance to heave a sigh,
They pity me, and not my grief.
Then come to me, my Son, or send
Some tidings that my woes may end;
I have no other earthly friend!

This last piece is perhaps one of the most favourable examples that could be produced in support of such a theory of poetry as Wordsworth appears to have set out with, and is supposed in the common notion to have adhered to in nearly all that he has written. The language is for the most part direct and simple, not very much distinguished except by the rhyme from what

might be poured out in the circumstances supposed on the mere impulse of natural passion; and yet the lines are full of poetical power. Undoubtedly, passion, or strong feeling, even in the rudest natures, has always something in it of poetry—something of the transforming and idealizing energy which gives both to conception and expression their poetical character; still it is not true either that poetry is universally nothing more than vivid sensation, or that the real language of men, however much excited, is usually to any considerable extent poetry. Even in this poem, unadorned as it is for the greater part, there will be found to be a good deal besides metre added to the natural language of passion; and the selection, too, must be understood as a selection of person as well as of language, for assuredly the Affliction of Margaret, even although it might have been as deeply felt, would not have supplied to one man or woman in a thousand or a million anything like either the diction or the train of reflection to which it has given birth in her—or rather in the great poet of whose imagination she, with all she feels and all she utters, is the creation. For this, after all, is the fundamental fact, that there never has been and never can be poetry without a poet; upon whatever principle or system of operation he may proceed, whether by the selection and metrical arrangement of the real language of passion or in any other way, it is the poet that makes the poetry, and without him it cannot have birth or being: he is the bee, without whom there can be no honey,—the artist, or true creator, from whom the thing produced, whatever be its material, takes shape, and beauty, and a living soul.

The following, dated 1798, is from the same class, and in the same style, with the last. The verses are very beautiful; they bear some resemblance to the touching old Scotch ballad called Lady Anna Bothwell's Lament, beginning

> Balow, my boy, lie still and sleep;
> It grieves me sair to see thee weep—

of which there is a copy in Percy's Reliques, and others, differing considerably from that, in other collections:—

> Her eyes are wild, her head is bare,
> The sun has burned her coal-black hair;
> Her eyebrows have a rusty stain,
> And she came far from over the main.

She has a baby on her arm,
Or else she were alone:
And underneath the haystack warm,
And on the greenwood stone,
She talked and sung the woods among,
And it was in the English tongue.

"Sweet babe, they say that I am mad,
But nay, my heart is far too glad;
And I am happy when I sing
Full many a sad and doleful thing:
Then, lovely baby, do not fear!
I pray thee, have no fear of me;
But safe as in a cradle, here,
My lovely baby, shalt thou be:
To thee I know too much I owe;
I cannot work thee any woe.

A fire was once within my brain;
And in my head a dull, dull pain;
And fiendish faces, one, two, three,
Hung at my breast, and pulled at me;
But then there came a sight of joy,
It came at once to do me good;
I waked, and saw my little boy,
My little boy of flesh and blood;
Oh joy for me that sight to see!
For he was there, and only he.

Suck, little babe, oh suck again!
It cools my blood, it cools my brain;
Thy lips I feel them, baby! they
Draw from my heart the pain away.
Oh! press me with thy little hand;
It loosens something at my chest;
About that tight and deadly band
I feel thy little fingers prest.
The breeze I see is in the tree:
It comes to cool my babe and me.

Oh! love me, love me, little boy!
Thou art thy mother's only joy;
And do not dread the waves below
When o'er the sea-rock's edge we go;
The high crag cannot work me harm,
Nor leaping torrents when they howl;
The babe I carry on my arm
He saves for me my precious soul;
Then happy lie; for blest am I;
Without me my sweet babe would die.

Then do not fear, my boy! for thee
Bold as a lion will I be:
And I will always be thy guide,
Through hollow snows and rivers wide.
I'll build an Indian bower; I know
The leaves that make the softest bed:
And if from me thou wilt not go,
But still be true till I am dead,
My pretty thing, then thou shalt sing
As merry as the birds in spring.

Thy father cares not for my breast,
'Tis thine, sweet baby, there to rest;
'Tis all thine own!—and, if its hue
Be changed, that was so fair to view,
'Tis fair enough for thee, my dove!
My beauty, little child, is flown,
But thou wilt live with me in love;
And what if my poor cheek be brown?
'Tis well for thee, thou canst not see
How pale and wan it else would be.

Dread not their taunts, my little life;
I am thy father's wedded wife;
And underneath the spreading tree
We two will live in honesty.
If his sweet boy he could forsake,
With me he never would have stayed;
From him no harm my babe can take;
But he, poor man! is wretched made;
And every day we two will pray
For him that 's gone and far away.

I 'll teach my boy the sweetest things,
I 'll teach him how the owlet sings.
My little babe! thy lips are still,
And thou hast almost sucked thy fill.
—— Where art thou gone, my own dear child?
What wicked looks are those I see?
Alas! alas! that look so wild,
It never, never came from me:
If thou art mad, my pretty lad,
Then I must be for ever sad.

Oh! smile on me, my little lamb!
For I thy own dear mother am.
My love for thee has well been tried:
I've sought thy father far and wide.

I know the poisons of the shade,
I know the earth-nuts fit for food:
Then, pretty dear, be not afraid:
We 'll find thy father in the wood.
Now laugh and be gay, to the woods away!
And there, my babe, we 'll live for aye."

But much, perhaps we might say the greater part, of Wordsworth's poetry is in a very different style or manner. Take, for example, his noble Laodamia, dated 1814, and in the later editions placed among what he calls Poems of the Imagination, though formerly classed as one of the Poems founded on the Affections:—

"With sacrifice before the rising morn
Vows have I made by fruitless hope inspired;
And from the infernal Gods, 'mid shades forlorn
Of night, my slaughtered Lord have I required:*
Celestial pity I again implore:—
Restore him to my sight—great Jove, restore!"

So speaking, and by fervent love endowed
With faith, the suppliant heavenward lifts her hands;
While, like the sun emerging from a cloud,
Her countenance brightens—and her eye expands;
Her bosom heaves and spreads, her stature grows;
And she expects the issue in repose.

O terror! what hath she perceived? O joy!
What doth she look on? Whom doth she behold?
Her Hero slain upon the beach of Troy?
His vital presence? his corporeal mould?
It is—if sense deceive her not—'tis He!
And a God leads him, winged Mercury!

Mild Hermes spake—and touched her with his wand
That calms all fear; "Such grace hath crowned thy prayer,
Laodamia! that at Jove's command
Thy husband walks the paths of upper air:
He comes to tarry with thee three hours' space;
Accept the gift, behold him face to face!"

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* Is this alteration really an improvement, or is it only old familiarity and first love that makes us prefer the lines as they originally stood?—

"With sacrifice before the rising morn
Performed my slaughtered Lord have I required;
And in thick darkness, amid shades forlorn,
Him of the infernal Gods have I desired."

It seems to us that the more passionate boldness of this is more in accordance with what immediately follows.

Forth sprang the impassioned Queen her Lord to clasp;
Again that consummation she assayed;
But unsubstantial form eludes her grasp
As often as that eager grasp was made.
The Phantom parts—but parts to re-unite,
And re-assume his place before her sight.

"Protesilaus, lo! thy guide is gone!
Confirm, I pray, the Vision with thy voice:
This is our palace,—yonder is thy throne;
Speak, and the floor thou tread'st on will rejoice.
Not to appal me have the Gods bestowed
This precious boon; and blest a sad abode."

"Great Jove, Laodamia! doth not leave
His gifts imperfect:—Spectre though I be,
I am not sent to scare thee or deceive;
But in reward of thy fidelity.
And something also did my worth obtain;
For fearless virtue bringeth boundless gain.

Thou knowest, the Delphic oracle foretold
That the first Greek who touched the Trojan strand
Should die; but me the threat could not withhold:
A generous cause a victim did demand;
And forth I leapt upon the sandy plain;
A self-devoted chief—by Hector slain."

"Supreme of Heroes—bravest, noblest, best!
Thy matchless courage I bewail no more,
Which then, when tens of thousands were deprest
By doubt, propelled thee to the fatal shore:
Thou found'st—and I forgive thee—here thou art—
A nobler counsellor than my poor heart.

But thou, though capable of sternest deed,
Wert kind as resolute, and good as brave;
And he, whose power restores thee, hath decreed
That thou should'st cheat the malice of the grave;
Redundant are thy locks, thy lips as fair
As when their breath enriched Thessalian air.

No Spectre greets me,—no vain Shadow this;
Come, blooming Hero, place thee by my side!
Give, on this well-known couch, one nuptial kiss
To me, this day, a second time thy bride!"
Jove frowned in heaven: the conscious Parcae threw
Upon those roseate lips a Stygian hue.

" This visage tells thee that my doom is past:
Nor should the change be mourned, even if the joys *
Of sense were able to return as fast
And surely as they vanish.—Earth destroys
Those raptures duly—Erebus disdains:
Calm pleasures there abide—majestic pains.

Be taught, O faithful Consort, to control
Rebellious passion: for the Gods approve
The depth, and not the tumult of the soul;
A fervent, not ungovernable love.
Thy transports moderate; and meekly mourn
When I depart, for brief is my sojourn."—

" Ah, wherefore?—Did not Hercules by force
Wrest from the guardian monster of the tomb
Alcestis, a reanimated corse,
Given back to dwell on earth in vernal bloom?
Medea's spells dispersed the weight of years,
And Aeson stood a youth 'mid youthful peers.

The Gods to us are merciful—and they
Yet further may relent: for mightier far
Than strength of nerve and sinew, or the sway
Of magic potent over sun and star,
Is love, though oft to agony distrest,
And though his favourite seat be feeble woman's breast.

But if thou goest I follow "—" Peace!" he said—
She looked upon him and was calmed and cheered;
The ghastly colour from his lips had fled;
In his deportment, shape, and mien appeared
Elysian beauty, melancholy grace,
Brought from a pensive, though a happy place.

He spake of love, such love as Spirits feel
In worlds whose course is equable and pure;
No fears to beat away—no strife to heal—
The past unsighed for, and the future sure;
Spake of heroic acts in graver mood
Revived, with finer harmony pursued;

Of all that is most beauteous—imaged there
In happier beauty; more pellucid streams,
An ampler ether, a diviner air,
And fields invested with purpureal gleams;

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* Its former editions:—

" Know, virtue were not virtue if the joys."

Climes which the sun, who sheds the brightest day
Earth knows, is all unworthy to survey.

Yet there the soul shall enter which hath earned
That privilege by virtue.—"Ill," said he,
"The end of man's existence I discerned,
Who from ignoble games and revelry
Could draw, when we had parted, vain delight,
While tears were thy best pastime day and night:

And while my youthful peers before my eyes
(Each hero following his peculiar bent)
Prepared themselves for glorious enterprise
By martial sports,—or, seated in the tent,
Chieftains and kings in council were detained;
What time the fleet at Aulis lay enchained.

The wished-for wind was given:—I then revolved
The oracle upon the silent sea;
And, if no worthier led the way, resolved
That, of a thousand vessels, mine should be
The foremost prow in pressing to the strand,—
Mine the first blood that tinged the Trojan sand.

Yet bitter, oftimes bitter, was the pang
When of thy loss I thought, beloved wife!
On thee too fondly did my memory hang,
And on the joys we shared in mortal life,—
The paths which we had trod—these fountains, flowers;
My new-planned cities, and unfinished towers.

But should suspense permit the foe to cry,
'Behold, they tremble!—haughty their array,
Yet of their number no one dares to die?'
In soul I swept the indignity away:
Old frailties then recurred:—but lofty thought,
In act embodied, my deliverance wrought.

And thou, though strong in love, art all too weak
In reason, in self-government too slow;
I counsel thee by fortitude to seek
Our blest reunion in the shades below.
The invisible world with thee hath sympathised;
Be thy affections raised and solemnised.

Learn, by a mortal yearning, to ascend—
Seeking a higher object. Love was given,
Encouraged, sanctioned, chiefly for that end;
For this the passion to excess was driven—

That self might be annulled; her bondage prove
The fetters of a dream, opposed to love."[1]

Aloud she shrieked! for Hermes reappears!
Round the dear shade she would have clung—'tis vain:
The hours are past—too brief had they been years;
And him no mortal effort can detain:
Swift, towards the realms that know not earthly day,
He through the portal takes his silent way,
And on the palace floor a lifeless corse she lay.

She—who, though warned, exhorted, and reproved,
Thus died, from passion desperate to a crime—
By the just Gods, whom no weak pity moved,
Was doomed to wear out her appointed time,
Apart from happy ghosts, that gather flowers
Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers.[2]

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[1] The reader of Milton will remember the same idea in the eighth book of Paradise Lost:—

"Love refines
The thoughts, and heart enlarges; hath his seat
In reason, and is judicious; is the scale
By which to heavenly love thou may'st ascend."

[2] This is to us, we confess, a distressing alteration; and such, we should think, would be nearly the universal feeling of those who may have been familiar with the original lines:—

"Ah, judge her gently who so deeply loved!
Her who, in reason's spite, yet without crime,
Was in a trance of passion thus removed;
Delivered from the galling yoke of time,
And these frail elements—to gather flowers
Of blissful quiet 'mid unfading bowers."

The primary object of the remodelling seems to have been to accommodate the narrative to the account given by Virgil, who, as it is observed in a note, "places the shade of Laodamia in a mournful region, among unhappy lovers." We confess to so much of "weak pity," both for the stanza as it formerly stood, and for poor Laodamia, that we should have gladly accepted the authority of the modern as quite as good as that of the ancient poet upon this occasion: but, at any rate, surely the verses might have been reformed without the aid of so desperate an expedient as that by which the second has been enabled to preserve its rhyme at the cost of every other poetical quality it possessed. We cannot think, either, that the gods, however pitiless, could with any justice or consistency, after having granted to Laodamia's passionate affection the temporary restoration of her husband, have doomed her to a place of punishment for merely suffering herself to be slain by the strength of the same affection. To expect that the warning exhortation and reproof should have so soon taken full efficacy, and already reduced a passion so omnipotent to complete subjection, seems quite unreasonable.

Yet tears to mortal suffering are due;
And mortal hopes defeated and o'erthrown
Are mourned by man,—and not by man alone,
As fondly he believes.—Upon the side
Of Hellespont (such faith was entertained)
A knot of spiry trees for ages grew
From out the tomb of him for whom she died;
And ever, when such stature they had gained
That Ilium's walls were subject to their view,
The trees' tall summits withered at the sight;
A constant interchange of growth and blight.

In the same grand strain is very much especially of Wordsworth's later poetry. Indeed, while the Lyrical Ballads have been ridiculed for their simplicity, the objection that has been commonly taken to most of that is, that it is too magniloquent, and soars too far above the earth and the ordinary thoughts and concerns of men. At any rate neither puerility nor over familiarity of diction, with whatever other faults they may be chargeable, can well be attributed to either the Excursion, or the Sonnets, or the Odes, or indeed to almost anything else that he produced subsequently to the two volumes which first brought him into notice, both published, as we have seen, before the commencement of the present century. But it is, on the other hand, a gross misconception to imagine that this later poetry of Wordsworth's is especially remarkable for anything of a mystic character—that it is for the most part enveloped in a haze through which the meaning is only to be got at by initiated eyes. Nothing like this is the case. The Excursion, published in 1814, for instance, with the exception of a very few passages, is a poem that he who runs may read, and the greater part of which may be apprehended by readers of all classes as readily as almost any other poetry in the language. We may say the same even of The Prelude, or Introduction to the Recluse (intended to consist of three Parts, of which The Excursion is the second, the first remaining in manuscript, and the third having been only planned), which was begun in 1799 and completed in 1805, although not published till a few months after the author's death in 1850; an elaborate poem, in fourteen books, of eminent interest as the poet's history of himself, and of the growth of his own mind, as well as on other accounts, and long before characterized by Coleridge, to whom it is addressed, as

"An Orphic song indeed,
A song divine of high and passionate thoughts
To their own music chanted."

In some of his other compositions, again, Wordsworth showed his mastery over the most popular of all our poetic styles, that of the old romance, in its highest and most refined forms. The Feast of Brougham may be mentioned as one example; but his greatest poem in this kind is his Egyptian Maid, or, The Romance of the Water Lily, the concluding portion of which we will now give as our last specimen. The Maid, a daughter of the Egyptian monarch, and sent by him to Britain to be bestowed upon the worthiest Christian knight, having been found cast ashore from her shipwrecked vessel, has been brought by the enchanter Merlin to the court of King Arthur at Caerleon. The king, after lamenting her sad hap, has proposed to inter with the due rites the apparently lifeless corse:—

"The tomb," said Merlin, "may not close
Upon her yet, earth hide her beauty;
Not froward to thy sovereign will
Esteem me, Liege! if I, whose skill
Wafted her hither, interpose
To check this pious haste of erring duty.

My books command me to lay bare
The secret thou art bent on keeping:
Here must a high attest be given,
What bridegroom was for her ordained by heaven:
And in my glass significants there are
Of things that may to gladness turn this weeping.

For this, approaching one by one,
Thy knights must touch the cold hand of the Virgin;
So, for the favoured one, the flower may bloom
Once more: but, if unchangeable her doom,
If life departed be for ever gone,
Some blest assurance, from this cloud emerging,

May teach him to bewail his loss;
Not with a grief that, like a vapour, rises
And melts; but grief devout that shall endure,
And a perpetual growth secure
Of purposes which no false thought shall cross,
A harvest of high hopes and noble enterprises."

"So be it," said the King;—"anon,
Here, where the princess lies, begin the trial;
Knights, each in order as ye stand
Step forth." To touch the pallid hand
Sir Agravaine advanced; no sign he won
From heaven or earth;—Sir Kaye had like denial.

Abashed, Sir Dinas turned away;
Even for Sir Percival was no disclosure;
Though he, devoutest of all champions, ere
He reached that ebon car, the bier
Whereon diffused like snow the damsel lay,
Full thrice had crossed himself in meek composure.

Imagine (but, ye saints! who can?)
How in still air the balance trembled—
The wishes, peradventure the despites,
That overcame some not ungenerous knights;
And all the thoughts that lengthened out a span
Of time to lords and ladies thus assembled.

What patient confidence was here!
And there how many bosoms panted!
While, drawing towards the car, Sir Gawaine, mailed
For tournament, his beaver vailed,
And softly touched; but to his princely cheer
And high expectancy no sign was granted.

Next, disencumbered of his harp,
Sir Tristram, dear to thousands as a brother,
Came to the proof, nor grieved that there ensued
No change;—the fair Izonda he had wooed
With love too true, a love with pangs too sharp,
From hope too distant, not to dread another!

Not so, Sir Launcelot;—from heaven's grace
A sign be craved, tired slave of vain contrition;
The royal Guinever looked passing glad
When his touch failed.—Next came Sir Galahad;
He paused, and stood entranced by that still face
Whose features he had seen in noontide vision.

For late, as near a murmuring stream
He rested 'mid an arbour green and shady,
Nina, the good enchantress, shed
A light around his mossy bed;
And, at her call, a waking dream
Prefigured to his sense the Egyptian lady.

Now, while his bright-haired front he bowed,
And stood, far-kenned by mantle furred with ermine,
As o'er the insensate body hung
The enrapt, the beautiful, the young,
Belief sank deep into the crowd
That he the solemn issue would determine.

Nor deem it strange; the youth had worn
That very mantle on a day of glory,
The day when he achieved that matchless feat,
The marvel of the PERILOUS SEAT,
Which whosoe'er approached of strength was shorn,
Though king or knight the most renowned in story.

He touched with hesitating hand—
And lo! those birds, far-famed through love's dominions,
The swans, in triumph clap their wings;
And their necks play, involved in rings,
Like sinless snakes in Eden's happy land;—
"Mine is she!" cried the knight;—again they clapped their pinions.

"Mine was she—mine she is, though dead,
And to her name my soul shall cleave in sorrow;"
Whereat, a tender twilight streak
Of colour dawned upon the damsel's cheek;
And her lips, quickening with uncertain red,
Seemed from each other a faint warmth to borrow.

Deep was the awe, the rapture high,
Of love emboldened, hope with dread entwining,
When, to the mouth, relenting death
Allowed a soft and flower-like breath,
Precursor to a timid sigh,
To lifted eyelids, and a doubtful shining.

. . . . . .

This will be admitted by all to be most graceful as well as expressive writing, and it has little or nothing of what are commonly regarded as the characteristic peculiarities of Wordsworth's manner—nothing of the undignified or over-familiar phraseology on the one hand, or of the soaring out of sight or comprehension on the other, with which he has been charged—only his easy power, the full flow and commanding sweep of his diction and his verse. Yet it is for its inner spirit that Wordsworth's poetry is admirable, rather than for its formal qualities. His style is for the most part direct and natural; when the occasion requires it rises to splendour and magnificence; if it be

sometimes too colloquial, it is often also dignified and solemn; still, with all its merits, it has not in general much of true artistic exquisiteness. In only a few of his poems, indeed, is his diction throughout of any tolerable elaboration and exactness; generally, both in his more familiar and in his loftier style, it is diffuse and unequal, a brittle mixture of poetical and prosaic forms, like the image of iron and clay in Nebuchadnezzar's dream. The music of his verse, too, though almost always pleasing, and sometimes impassioned or majestic, has rarely or never much either of subtlety or originality.

Coleridge.

In all that constitutes artistic character the poetry of Coleridge is a contrast to that of Wordsworth. Coleridge, born in 1772, published the earliest of his poetry that is now remembered in 1796, in a small volume containing also some pieces by Charles Lamb, to which some by Charles Lloyd were added in a second edition the following year. It was not till 1800, after he had produced and printed separately his Ode to the Departing Year (1796), his noble ode entitled France (1797), his Fears in Solitude (1798), and his translations of both parts of Schiller's Wallenstein, that he was first associated as a poet and author with Wordsworth, in the second volume of whose Lyrical Ballads, published in 1800, appeared, as the contributions of an anonymous friend, Coleridge's Ancient Mariner, Foster Mother's Tale, Nightingale, and Love. "I should not have requested this assistance," said Wordsworth, in his preface, "had I not believed that the poems of my friend would, in a great measure, have the same tendency as my own, and that, though there would be found a difference, there would be found no discordance, in the colours of our style; as our opinions on the subject of poetry do almost entirely coincide." Coleridge's own account, however, is somewhat different. In his Biographia Literaria, he tells us that, besides the Ancient Mariner, he was preparing for the conjoint publication, among other poems, the Dark Ladie and the Christabel, in which he should have more nearly realized his ideal than he had done in his first attempt, when the volume was brought out with so much larger a portion of it the produce of Wordsworth's industry than his own, that his few compo-

sitions, "instead of forming a balance, appeared rather an interpolation of heterogeneous matter;" and then he adds, in reference to the long preface in which Wordsworth had expounded his theory of poetry, "With many parts of this preface in the sense attributed to them, and which the words undoubtedly seem to authorize, I never concurred; but, on the contrary, objected to them as erroneous in principle and contradictory (in appearance at least) both to other parts of the same preface, and to the author's own practice in the greater number of the poems themselves."

Coleridge's poetry is remarkable for the perfection of its execution, for the exquisite art with which its divine spirit is endowed with formal expression. The subtly woven words, with all their sky colours, seem to grow out of the thought or emotion, as the flower from its stalk, or the flame from its feeding oil. The music of his verse, too, especially of what he has written in rhyme, is as sweet and as characteristic as anything in the language, placing him for that rare excellence in the same small band with Shakespeare, and Beaumont and Fletcher (in their lyrics), and Milton, and Collins, and Shelley, and Tennyson. It was probably only quantity that was wanting to make Coleridge the greatest poet of his day. Certainly, at least, some things that he has written have not been surpassed, if they have been matched, by any of his contemporaries. And (as indeed has been the case with almost all great poets) he continued to write better and better the longer he wrote; some of his happiest verses were the produce of his latest years. To quote part of what we have said in a paper published immediately after Coleridge's death:—"Not only, as we proceed from his earlier to his later compositions, does the execution become much more artistic and perfect, but the informing spirit is refined and purified—the tenderness grows more delicate and deep, the fire brighter and keener, the sense of beauty more subtle and exquisite. Yet from the first there was in all he wrote the divine breath which essentially makes poetry what it is. There was 'the shaping spirit of imagination,' evidently of soaring pinion and full of strength, though as yet sometimes unskilfully directed, and encumbered in its flight by an affluence of power which it seemed hardly to know how to manage: hence an unselecting impetuosity in these early compositions, never indicating anything like poverty of thought, but producing occasionally considerable awkwardness

and turgidity of style, and a declamatory air, from which no poetry was ever more free than that of Coleridge in its maturer form. Yet even among these juvenile productions are many passages, and some whole pieces, of perfect gracefulness, and radiant with the purest sunlight of poetry. There is, for example, the most beautiful delicacy of sentiment, as well as sweetness of versification and expression, in the following lines, simple as they are:—

Maid of my love, sweet Genevieve!
In beauty's light you glide along;
Your eye is like the star of eve,
And sweet your voice as Seraph's song.
Yet not your heavenly beauty gives
This heart with passion soft to glow:
Within your soul a voice there lives!
It bids you hear the tale of woe.
When, sinking low, the sufferer wan
Beholds no hand outstretched to save,
Fair, as the bosom of the swan
That rises graceful o'er the wave,
I 've seen your breast with pity heave;
And therefore love I you, sweet Genevieve!

And the following little picture, entitled Time, Real and Imaginary, is a gem worthy of the poet in the most thoughtful and philosophic strength of his faculties:—

On the wide level of a mountain's head
(I knew not where, but 'twas some fairy place),
Their pinions, ostrich-like, for sails outspread,
Two lovely children ran an endless race;
A sister and a brother!
That far outstripped the other;
Yet ever runs she with reverted face,
And looks and listens for the boy behind:
For he, alas! is blind!
O'er rough and smooth with even step he passed,
And knows not whether he be first or last.

In a different manner, and more resembling that of these early poems in general, are many passages of great power in the Monody on the Death of Chatterton, and in the Religious Musings, the latter written in 1794, when the author was only in his twenty-third year. And, among other remarkable pieces of a date not much later, might be mentioned the ode entitled France, written in 1797, which Shelley regarded as the finest

ode in the language; his Fire, Famine, and Slaughter, written, we believe, about the same time; his ode entitled Dejection; his blank verse lines entitled The Nightingale; his Rime of the Ancient Mariner, and his exquisite verses entitled Love, to which last for their union of passion with delicacy, and of both with the sweetest, richest music, it would be difficult to find a match in our own or any language.

"Of Coleridge's poetry, in its most matured form and in its best specimens, the most distinguishing characteristics are vividness of imagination and subtlety of thought, combined with unrivalled beauty and expressiveness of diction, and the most exquisite melody of verse. With the exception of a vein of melancholy and meditative tenderness, flowing rather from a contemplative survey of the mystery—the strangely mingled good and evil—of all things human, than connected with any individual interests, there is not in general much of passion in his compositions, and he is not well fitted, therefore, to become a very popular poet, or a favourite with the multitude. His love itself, warm and tender as it is, is still Platonic and spiritual in its tenderness, rather than a thing of flesh and blood. There is nothing in his poetry of the pulse of fire that throbs in that of Burns; neither has he much of the homely every-day truth, the proverbial and universally applicable wisdom, of Wordsworth. Coleridge was, far more than either of these poets, 'of imagination *all* compact.' The fault of his poetry is the same that belongs to that of Spenser; it is too purely or unalloyedly poetical. But rarely, on the other hand, has there existed an imagination in which so much originality and daring were associated and harmonized with so gentle and tremblingly delicate a sense of beauty. Some of his minor poems especially, for the richness of their colouring combined with the most perfect finish, can be compared only to the flowers which spring up into loveliness at the touch of 'great creating nature.' The words, the rhyme, the whole flow of the music seem to be not so much the mere expression or sign of the thought as its blossoming or irradiation—of the bright essence the equally bright though sensible effluence."*

The poem entitled Love is somewhat too long to be given entire; and it is, besides, probably familiar to most of our readers; but those of them to whom it is best known will not

* Printing Machine, No. 12, for 16th August, 1834.

object to have a few of the verses again placed before them here:—

All thoughts, all passions, all delights,
Whatever stirs this mortal frame,
All are but ministers of Love,
And feed his sacred flame.

Oft in my waking dreams do I
Live o'er again that happy hour,
When midway on the mount I lay,
Beside the ruined tower.

The moonshine, stealing o'er the scene,
Had blended with the lights of eve;
And she was there, my hope, my joy,
My own dear Genevieve!

She leaned against the armed man,
The statue of the armed knight;
She stood and listened to my lay,
Amid the lingering light.

Few sorrows hath she of her own,
My hope, my joy, my Genevieve!
She loves me best whene'er I sing
The songs that make her grieve.

I played a soft and doleful air,
I sang an old and moving story—
An old rude song, that suited well
That ruin wild and hoary.

She listened with a flitting blush,
With downcast eyes and modest grace;
For well she knew I could not choose
But gaze upon her face.

I told her of the knight that wore
Upon his shield a burning brand;
And that for ten long years he wooed
The Lady of the Land.

I told her how he pined; and ah!
The deep, the low, the pleading tone,
With which I sang another's love,
Interpreted my own.

. . . . . .

All impulses of soul and sense
Had thrilled my guileless Genevieve;
The music and the doleful tale,
The rich and balmy eve;

And hopes, and fears that kindle hope,
An undistinguishable throng,
And gentle wishes long subdued,
Subdued and cherished long!

She wept with pity and delight,
She blushed with love, and virgin shame;
And like the murmur of a dream
I heard her breathe my name.

Her bosom heaved—she stepped aside,
As conscious of my look she stept—
Then suddenly, with timorous eye,
She fled to me and wept.

She half inclosed me with her arms,
She pressed me with a meek embrace;
And, bending back her head, looked up,
And gazed upon my face.

'Twas partly love, and partly fear,
And partly 'twas a bashful art,
That I might rather feel, than see,
The swelling of her heart.

I calmed her fears, and she was calm,
And told her love with virgin pride;
And so I won my Genevieve,
My bright and beauteous bride.

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Here is another melodious breathing of deeper and more thoughtful tenderness, entitled Sonnet, To a Friend who asked how I felt when the Nurse first presented my Infant to me:—

Charles! my slow heart was only sad, when first
I scanned that face of feeble infancy:
For dimly on my thoughtful spirit burst
All I had been, and all my child might be!
But when I saw it on its mother's arm,
And hanging at her bosom (she the while
Bent o'er its features with a tearful smile),
Then I was thrilled and melted, and most warm
Impressed a father's kiss; and, all beguiled
Of dark remembrance and presageful fear,
I seemed to see an angel form appear:—
'Twas even thine, beloved woman mild!
So for the mother's sake the child was dear,
And dearer was the mother for the child.

From the loftier poetry of this early date, or a time not much

later, all that we can give is a portion of the ode entitled Dejection :—

. . . . . .

My genial spirits fail;
And what can these avail
To lift the smothering weight from off my breast?
It were a vain endeavour,
Though I should gaze for ever
On that green light that lingers in the west:
I may not hope from outward forms to win
The passion and the life, whose fountains are within.
O Lady! we receive but what we give,
And in our life alone does nature live:
Ours is her wedding garment, ours her shroud!
And, would we aught behold of higher worth
Than that inanimate cold world allowed
To the poor loveless ever-anxious crowd,
Ah! from the soul itself must issue forth
A light, a glory, a fair luminous cloud
Enveloping the earth;—
And from the soul itself must there be sent
A sweet and potent voice, of its own birth,
Of all sweet sounds the life and element!

O pure of heart! thou need'st not ask of me
What this strong music in the soul may be!
What, and wherein it doth exist,
This light, this glory, this fair luminous mist,
This beautiful and beauty-making power.
Joy, virtuous Lady! Joy, that ne'er was given
Save to the pure, and in their purest hour,
Life and life's effluence, cloud at once and shower,
Joy, Lady! is the spirit and the power
Which wedding Nature to us gives in dower,
A new Earth and new Heaven,
Undreamt of by the sensual and the proud—
Joy is the sweet voice, Joy the luminous cloud:—
We in ourselves rejoice!
And thence flows all that charms or ear or sight,
All melodies the echoes of that voice,
All colours a suffusion from that light.

There was a time when, though my path was rough,
This joy within me dallied with distress,
And all misfortunes were but as the stuff
Whence fancy made me dreams of happiness;
For hope grew round me, like the twining vine,
And fruits, and foliage, not my own, seemed mine.

But now afflictions bow me down to earth;
Nor care I that they rob me of my mirth,
  But ah! each visitation
Suspends what nature gave me at my birth,
  My shaping spirit of Imagination.
For not to think of what I needs must feel,
  But to be still and patient, all I can;
And haply by abstruse research to steal
  From my own nature all the natural man—
  This was my sole resource, my only plan:
Till that which suits a part infects the whole,
And now is almost grown the habit of my soul.

Some resemblance may be traced between the thought in a part of this extract and Wordsworth's noble ode entitled Intimations of Immortality from Recollections of early Childhood, where he exclaims—

There was a time when meadow, grove, and stream,
The earth and every common sight,
  To me did seem
  Apparelled in celestial light,
The glory and the freshness of a dream.
It is not now as it hath been of yore;—
  Turn wheresoe'er I may,
  By night or day,
The things which I have seen I now can see no more.

. . . . . .

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
  Hath had elsewhere its setting,
  And cometh from afar.

. . . . . .

Heaven lies about us in our infancy!
Shades of the prison-house begin to close
  Upon the growing Boy;
But he beholds the light, and whence it flows,
  He sees it in his joy;
The Youth, who daily farther from the east
  Must travel, still is Nature's Priest,
  And by the vision splendid
  Is on his way attended;
At length the Man perceives it die away,
And fade into the light of common day.

It is almost profanation to mutilate this magnificent hymn; but, having given the above lines, we will add another passage, which can be separated with the least injury from the rest:—

O joy! that in our embers
Is something that doth live,
That Nature yet remembers
What was so fugitive!
The thought of our past years in me doth breed
Perpetual benediction: not indeed
For that which is most worthy to be blest;
Delight and liberty, the simple creed
Of childhood, whether busy or at rest,
With new-fledged hope still fluttering in his breast:—
Not for these I raise
The song of thanks and praise;
But for those obstinate questionings
Of sense and outward things,
Fallings from us, vanishings;
Blank misgivings of a creature
Moving about in worlds not realised,
High instincts before which our mortal nature
Did tremble like a guilty thing surprised!

But for those first affections,
Those shadowy recollections,
Which be they what they may,
Are yet the fountain light of all our day,
Are yet a master light of all our seeing;
Uphólds us, cherish, and have power to make
Our noisy years seem moments in the being
Of the eternal silence: truths that wake
To perish never;
Which neither listlessness nor mad endeavour,
Nor Man nor Boy,
Nor all that is at enmity with joy,
Can utterly abolish or destroy!
Hence in a season of calm weather,
Though inland far we be,
Our souls have sight of that immortal sea
Which brought us hither,
Can in a moment travel thither,
And see the children sport upon the shore,
And hear the mighty waters rolling evermore.

Then sing, ye birds, sing, sing a joyous song!
And let the young lambs bound
As to the tabor's sound!
We in thought will join your throng,
Ye that pipe and ye that play,
Ye that through your hearts to-day
Feel the gladness of the May!
What though the radiance which was once so bright
Be now for ever taken from my sight,

Though nothing can bring back the hour
Of splendour in the grass, of glory in the flower;
We will grieve not, rather find
Strength in what remains behind;
In the primal sympathy
Which having been must ever be;
In the soothing thoughts that spring
Out of human suffering;
In the faith that looks through death,
In years that bring the philosophic mind.

No comparison, of course, is to be instituted between this grand declamation and Coleridge's much less elaborate ode. As a remarkable illustration, however, of the difference between the poetical genius of the one and that of the other when exercised in a more light and fanciful manner, we will give an example of the treatment of the same subject by both. The following little poem by Wordsworth is entitled The Complaint:—

There is a change—and I am poor;
Your love hath been, not long ago,
A fountain at my fond heart's door,
Whose only business was to flow;
And flow it did; not taking heed
Of its own bounty, or my need.

What happy moments did I count!
Blest was I then all bliss above;
Now, for that consecrated fount
Of murmuring, sparkling, living love
What have I? shall I dare to tell?
A comfortless and hidden well.

A well of love—it may be deep—
I trust it is,—and never dry:
What matter? if the waters sleep
In silence and obscurity?
—Such change, and at the very door
Of my fond heart, hath made me poor.

The following, entitled The Pang more sharp than All, an Allegory, is Coleridge's:—

He too has flitted from his secret nest,
Hope's last and dearest child without a name!—
Has flitted from me, like the warmthless flame,
That makes false promise of a place of rest
To the tired pilgrim's still believing mind;—
Or like some elfin knight in kingly court,
Who, having won all guerdons in his sport,
Glides out of view, and whither none can find.

Yes! He hath flitted from me—with what aim,
Or why, I know not! 'Twas a home of bliss,
And he was innocent, as the pretty shame
Of babe, that tempts and shuns the menaced kiss,
From its twy-clustered hiding-place of snow!
Pure as the babe, I ween, and all aglow
As the dear hopes that swell the mother's breast—
Her eyes down-gazing o'er her clasped charge;—
Yet gay as that twice happy father's kiss,
That well might glance aside, yet never miss,
Where the sweet mark embossed so sweet a targe—
Twice wretched he who hath been doubly blest!

Like a loose blossom on a gusty night
He flitted from me—and has left behind
(As if to them his faith he ne'er did plight),
Of either sex and answerable mind,
Two playmates, twin-births of his foster-dame:—
The one a steady lad (Esteem he hight)
And Kindness is the gentler sister's name;
Dim likeness now, though fair she be and good,
Of that bright boy who hath us all forsook:—
But, in his full-eyed aspect when she stood,
And while her face reflected every look,
And in reflection kindled, she became
So like him, that almost she seemed the same!

Ah! he is gone, and yet will not depart!—
Is with me still, yet I from him exiled!
For still there lives within my secret heart
The magic image of the magic child,
Which there he made up-grow by his strong art,
As in that crystal orb[1]—Wise Merlin's feat—
The wondrous "World of Glass," wherein inisled
All longed-for things their beings did repeat;—
And there he left it, like a sylph beguiled,
To live and yearn and languish incomplete!

Can wit of man a heavier grief reveal?
Can sharper pang from hate or scorn arise?—
Yes! one more sharp there is—that deeper lies,
Which fond esteem but mocks when he would heal.
Yet neither scorn nor hate did it devise,
But sad compassion and atoning zeal!
One pang more blighting-keen than hope betrayed!
And this it is my woeful hap to feel,
When, at her brother's hest, the twin-born maid,

[1] Faerie Queene, iii. 2, 19.

With face averted and unsteady eyes,
Her truant playmate's faded robe puts on;
And, inly shrinking from her own disguise,
Enacts the faery boy that's lost and gone.
O worse than all! O pang all pangs above
Is Kindness counterfeiting absent Love!

But Wordsworth and Coleridge, each gaining and each losing something, come much nearer to one another in their later poetry: that of Wordsworth takes more of the sky, that of Coleridge more of the earth; the former drops a good deal of its excessive realism (to use the word in a somewhat peculiar, but sufficiently intelligible sense), the latter something of its over-idealism. Among those of Coleridge's poems, however, to which an early date is fixed, there are a few, the execution of which is so perfect, that we should be inclined to think they had undergone much revision before they were published, and that, in part at least, they are to be properly considered as really the produce of his later years. His Christabel, for instance, is stated to have been written, the First Part in 1797, the Second Part in 1800; but we cannot help suspecting that the following lines, from what is called the Conclusion to Part First, may have been an addition made not very long before the first publication of the poem in 1816:—

And see! the lady Christabel
Gathers herself from out her trance;
Her limbs relax, her countenance
Grows sad and soft; the smooth thin lids
Close o'er her eyes; and tears she sheds—
Large tears that leave the lashes bright!
And oft the while she seems to smile
As infants at a sudden light!
Yea, she doth smile, and she doth weep,
Like a youthful hermitess,
Beauteous in a wilderness,
Who, praying always, prays in sleep.
And, if she move unquietly,
Perchance, 'tis but the blood so free,
Comes back and tingles in her feet.
No doubt, she hath a vision sweet.
What if her guardian spirit 'twere?
What if she knew her mother near?
But this she knows, in joys and woes,
That saints will aid if men will call:
For the blue sky bends over all!

The filmy delicacy of this writing is exquisite; every word is light and music. Equally beautiful, and in the same style, is the following little fragment, being the introductory stanzas of a poem on the Wanderings of Cain, in which we are led to understand some progress had been made at an early date, although this stanza, all of the poem that has been preserved, was not published till towards the close of the author's life:—

Encinctured with a twine of leaves,
That leafy twine his only dress,
A lovely boy was plucking fruits,
By moonlight, in a wilderness.
The moon was bright, the air was free,
And fruits and flowers together grew
On many a shrub and many a tree:
And all put on a gentle hue,
Hanging in the shadowy air
Like a picture rich and rare.
It was a climate where, they say,
The night is more beloved than day.
But who that beauteous boy beguiled,
That beauteous boy to linger here?
Alone, by night, a little child,
In place so silent and so wild—
Has he no friend, no loving mother near?

In most of Coleridge's latest poetry, however, along with this perfection of execution, in which he was unmatched, we have more body and warmth—more of the inspiration of the heart mingling with that of the fancy. But, before quoting the specimens we intend to give of that, we would introduce a little piece, which seems to us eminently tender and beautiful, although less remarkable for high finish; it is entitled A Day Dream:—

My eyes make pictures when they are shut:
I see a fountain, large and fair,
A willow and a ruined hut,
And thee, and me, and Mary there.
O Mary! make thy gentle lap our pillow!
Bend o'er us, like a bower, my beautiful green willow!

A wild-rose roofs the ruined shed,
And that and summer well agree:
And lo! where Mary leans her head,
Two dear names carved upon the tree!
And Mary's tears, they are not tears of sorrow:
Our sister and our friend will both be here to-morrow.

'Twas day, but now few, large, and bright
The stars are round the crescent moon!
And now it is a dark warm night,
The balmiest of the month of June!
A glow-worm fallen, and on the marge remounting,
Shines, and its shadow shines, fit stars for our sweet fountain.

O ever—ever be thou blest!
For dearly, Asra, love I thee!
This brooding warmth across my breast,
This depth of tranquil bliss—ah me!
Fount, tree, and shed are gone, I know not whither,
But in one quiet room we three are still together.

The shadows dance upon the wall,
By the still dancing fire-flames made;
And now they slumber, moveless all!
And now they melt to one deep shade!
But not from me shall this mild darkness steal thee:
I dream thee with mine eyes, and at my heart I feel thee!

Thine eye-lash on my cheek doth play—
'Tis Mary's hand upon my brow!
But let me check this tender lay,
Which none may hear but she and thou!
Like the still hive at quiet midnight humming,
Murmur it to yourselves, ye two beloved women!

We will now present a few of those gems without a flaw which were the latest produce of Coleridge's genius. The following lines are entitled Work without Hope, and are stated to have been composed 21st February, 1827:—

All nature seems at work. Slugs leave their lair—
The bees are stirring—birds are on the wing—
And winter, slumbering in the open air,
Wears on his smiling face a dream of spring!
And I, the while, the sole unbusy thing,
Nor honey make, nor pair, nor build, nor sing.

Yet well I ken the banks where amaranths blow,
Have traced the fount whence streams of nectar flow.
Bloom, O ye amaranths! bloom for whom ye may,
For me ye bloom not! Glide, rich streams, away!
With lips unbrightened, wreathless brow, I stroll:
And would you learn the spells that drowse my soul?
Work without hope draws nectar in a sieve,
And hope without an object cannot live.

To about the same date belongs the following, entitled Youth and Age:—

Verse, a breeze mid blossoms straying,
Where Hope clung feeding, like a bee—
Both were mine! Life went a maying
With Nature, Hope, and Poesy,
When I was young!
When I was young?—Ah, woeful when!
Ah! for the change 'twixt now and then!
This breathing house not built with hands,
This body that does me grievous wrong,
O'er airy cliffs and glittering sands
How lightly then it flashed along:—
Like those trim skiffs, unknown of yore,
On winding lakes and rivers wide,
That ask no aid of sail or oar,
That fear no spite of wind or tide!
Nought cared this body for wind or weather
When youth and I lived in't together.

Flowers are lovely; love is flower-like;
Friendship is a sheltering tree;
O! the joys that came down shower-like,
Of Friendship, Love, and Liberty,
Ere I was old!
Ere I was old?—Ah, woeful ere,
Which tells me, Youth's no longer here!
O Youth! for years so many and sweet
'Tis known that thou and I were one;
I'll think it but a fond conceit—
It cannot be, that thou art gone!
Thy vesper-bell hath not yet tolled:—
And thou wert aye a masker bold!
What strange disguise hast now put on,
To make believe that thou art gone?
I see these locks in silvery slips,
This drooping gait, this altered size:
But springtide blossoms on thy lips,
And tears take sunshine from thine eyes!
Life is but thought: so think I will
That Youth and I are house-mates still.

Dew-drops are the gems of morning,
But the tears of mournful eve!
Where no hope is, life's a warning
That only serves to make us grieve,
When we are old:
That only serves to make us grieve,
With oft and tedious taking leave;

Like some poor nigh-related guest,
That may not rudely be dismist,
Yet hath outstayed his welcome while,
And tells the jest without the smile.

The following was written, we believe, a year or two later. It winds up a prose dialogue between two girls and their elderly male friend the Poet, or Improvisatore, as he is more familiarly styled, who, after a most eloquent description of that rare mutual love, the possession of which he declares would be more than an adequate reward for the rarest virtue, to the remark, "Surely, he who has described it so well must have possessed it?" replies, "If he were worthy to have possessed it, and had believingly anticipated and not found it, how bitter the disappointment!" and then, after a pause, breaks out into verse thus:—

Yes, yes! that boon, life's richest treat,
He had, or fancied that he had;
Say, 'twas but in his own conceit—
The fancy made him glad!
Crown of his cup, and garnish of his dish,
The boon prefigured in his earliest wish,
The fair fulfilment of his poesy,
When his young heart first yearned for sympathy!

But e'en the meteor offspring of the brain
Unnourished wane;
Faith asks her daily bread,
And fancy must be fed.
Now so it chanced—from wet or dry,
It boots not how—I know not why—
She missed her wonted food; and quickly
Poor fancy staggered and grew sickly.
Then came a restless state, 'twixt yea and nay,
His faith was fixed, his heart all ebb and flow;
Or like a bark, in some half-sheltered bay,
Above its anchor driving to and fro.

That boon, which but to have possest
In a belief gave life a zest—
Uncertain both what it had been,
And if by error lost, or luck;
And what it was;—an evergreen
Which some insidious blight had struck,
Or annual flower, which, past its blow,
No vernal spell shall e'er revive!
Uncertain, and afraid to know,
Doubts tossed him to and fro:

Hope keeping Love, Love Hope, alive,
Like babes bewildered in the snow,
That cling and huddle from the cold
In hollow tree or ruined fold.

Those sparkling colours, once his boast,
Fading, one by one away,
Thin and hueless as a ghost,
Poor fancy on her sick-bed lay;
Ill at a distance, worse when near,
Telling her dreams to jealous fear!
Where was it then, the sociable sprite
That crowned the poet's cup and decked his dish!
Poor shadow cast from an unsteady wish,
Itself a substance by no other right
But that it intercepted reason's light;
It dimmed his eye, it darkened on his brow:
A peevish mood, a tedious time, I trow!
Thank heaven! 'tis not so now.

O bliss of blissful hours!
The boon of heaven's decreeing,
While yet in Eden's bowers
Dwelt the first husband and his sinless mate!
The one sweet plant, which, piteous heaven agreeing,
They bore with them through Eden's closing gate!
Of life's gay summer tide the sovran rose!
Late autumn's amaranth, that more fragrant blows
When passion's flowers all fall or fade;
If this were ever his in outward being,
Or but his own true love's projected shade,
Now that at length by certain proof he knows
That, whether real or a magic show,
Whate'er it was, it is no longer so;
Though heart be lonesome, hope laid low,
Yet, lady, deem him not unblest;
The certainty that struck hope dead
Hath left contentment in her stead:
And that is next to best!

And still more perfect and altogether exquisite, we think, than anything we have yet given, is the following, entitled Love, Hope, and Patience, in Education:—

O'er wayward childhood would'st thou hold firm rule,
And sun thee in the light of happy faces;
Love, Hope, and Patience, these must be thy graces,
And in thine own heart let them first keep school.
For, as old Atlas on his broad neck places
Heaven's starry globe, and there sustains it,—so

Do these upbear the little world below
Of Education,—Patience, Love, and Hope.
Methinks, I see them grouped in seemly show,
The straitened arms upraised, the palms aslope,
And robes that touching, as adown they flow,
Distinctly blend, like snow embossed in snow.

O part them never! If Hope prostrate lie,
Love too will sink and die.
But Love is subtle, and doth proof derive
From her own life that Hope is yet alive;
And, bending o'er with soul-transfusing eyes,
And the soft murmurs of the mother dove,
Woos back the fleeting spirit, and half supplies:—
Thus Love repays to Hope what Hope first gave to Love.

Yet haply there will come a weary day,
When overtasked at length
Both Love and Hope beneath the load give way.
Then, with a statue's smile, a statue's strength,
Stands the mute sister, Patience, nothing loth,
And both supporting does the work of both.

Southey.

Coleridge died in 1834; his friend Southey, born three years later, survived to 1843. If Coleridge wrote too little poetry, Southey may be said to have written too much and too rapidly. Southey, as well as Coleridge, has been popularly reckoned one of the Lake poets; but it is difficult to assign any meaning to that name which should entitle it to comprehend either the one or the other. Southey, indeed, was, in the commencement of his career, the associate of Wordsworth and Coleridge; a portion of his first poem, his Joan of Arc, published in 1796, was written by Coleridge; and he afterwards took up his residence, as well as Wordsworth, among the lakes of Westmoreland. But, although in his first volume of minor poems, published in 1797, there was something of the same simplicity or plainness of style, and choice of subjects from humble life, by which Wordsworth sought to distinguish himself about the same time, the manner of the one writer bore only a very superficial resemblance to that of the other; whatever it was, whether something quite original, or only, in the main, an inspiration caught from the Germans, that gave its peculiar character to Wordsworth's poetry, it was

wanting in Southey's; he was evidently, with all his ingenuity and fertility, and notwithstanding an ambition of originality which led him to be continually seeking after strange models, from Arabian and Hindoo mythologies to Latin hexameters, of a genius radically imitative, and not qualified to put forth its strength except while moving in a beaten track and under the guidance of long-established rules. Southey was by nature a conservative in literature as well as in politics, and the eccentricity of his Thalabas and Kehamas was as merely spasmodic as the Jacobinism of his Wat Tyler. But even Thalaba and Kehama, whatever they may be, are surely not poems of the Lake school. And in most of his other poems, especially in his latest epic, Roderick, the Last of the Goths, Southey is in verse what he always was in prose, one of the most thoroughly and unaffectedly English of our modern writers. The verse, however, is too like prose to be poetry of a very high order; it is flowing and eloquent, but has little of the distinctive life or lustre of poetical composition. There is much splendour and beauty, however, in the Curse of Kehama, the most elaborate of his long poems. As a specimen we will transcribe from the beginning of the Seventh Book or Canto the description of the voyage of the heroine, the lovely and virtuous Kailyal, through the air to the Swerga, or lowest heaven, with her preserver the Glendoveer, or pure spirit, Ereenia:—

Then in the ship of heaven Ereenia laid
The waking, wondering maid;
The ship of heaven, instinct with thought, displayed
Its living sail, and glides along the sky.
On either side, in wavy tide,
The clouds of morn along its path divide;
The winds who swept in wild career on high
Before its presence check their charmed force;
The winds that loitering lagged along their course
Around the living bark enamoured play,
Swell underneath the sail, and sing before its way.

That bark, in shape, was like the furrowed shell
Wherein the sea-nymphs to their parent-king,
On festal day, their duteous offerings bring.
Its hue?—Go watch the last green light
Ere evening yields the western star to night;
Or fix upon the sun thy strenuous sight
Till thou hast reached its orb of chrysolite.

The sail, from end to end displayed,
Bent, like a rainbow, o'er the maid.
An angel's head, with visual eye,
Through trackless space directs its chosen way;
Nor aid of wing, nor foot, nor fin,
Requires to voyage o'er the obedient sky.
Smooth as the swan when not a breeze at even
Disturbs the surface of the silver stream,
Through air and sunshine sails the ship of heaven.

Recumbent there the maiden glides along
On her aërial way,
How swift she feels not, though the swiftest wind
Had flagged in flight behind.
Motionless as a sleeping babe she lay,
And all serene in mind,
Feeling no fear; for that ethereal air
With such new life and joyance filled her heart
Fear could not enter there;
For sure she deemed her mortal part was o'er,
And she was sailing to the heavenly shore;
And that angelic form, who moved beside,
Was some good spirit sent to be her guide.

Daughter of earth! therein thou deem'st aright;
And never yet did form more beautiful,
In dreams of night descending from on high,
Bless the religious virgin's gifted sight,
Nor like a vision of delight
Rise on the raptured poet's inward eye.
Of human form divine was he,
The immortal youth of heaven who floated by,
Even such as that divinest form shall be
In those blest stages of our onward race,
When no infirmity,
Low thought, nor base desire, nor wasting care,
Deface the semblance of our heavenly sire.

The wings of eagle or of cherubim
Had seemed unworthy him;
Angelic power, and dignity and grace
Were in his glorious pennons; from the neck
Down to the ankle reached their swelling web,
Richer than robes of Tyrian dye, that deck
Imperial majesty:
Their colour like the winter's moonless sky,
When all the stars of midnight's canopy
Shine forth; or like the azure steep at noon,
Reflecting back to heaven a brighter blue.

Such was their tint when closed; but, when outspread,
The permeating light
Shed through their substance thin a varying hue;
Now bright as when the rose,
Beauteous as fragrant, gives to scent and sight
A like delight; now like the juice that flows
From Douro's generous vine;
Or ruby, when with deepest red it glows;
Or as the morning clouds refulgent shine,
When, at forthcoming of the lord of day,
The orient, like a shrine,
Kindles as it receives the rising ray,
And, heralding his way,
Proclaims the presence of the Power divine.

Thus glorious were the wings
Of that celestial spirit, as he went
Disporting through his native element.
Nor there alone
The gorgeous beauties that they gave to view;
Through the broad membrane branched a pliant bone;
Spreading like fibres from their parent stem,
Its veins like interwoven silver shone;
Or as the chaster hue
Of pearls that grace some Sultan's diadem.
Now with slow stroke and strong behold him smite
The buoyant air, and now, in gentler flight,
On motionless wing expanded, shoot along.

Through air and sunshine sails the ship of heaven;
Far, far beneath them lies
The gross and heavy atmosphere of earth;
And with the Swerga gales
The maid of mortal birth
At every breath a new delight inhales.
And now toward its port the Ship of Heaven
Swift as a falling meteor shapes its flight,
Yet gently as the dews of night that gem
And do not bend the hare-bell's slenderest stem.
Daughter of earth, Ereenia cried, alight;
This is thy place of rest, the Swerga this,
Lo, here my bower of bliss!
He furled his azure wings, which round him fold
Graceful as robes of Grecian chief of old.
The happy Kailyal knew not where to gaze;
Her eyes around in joyful wonder roam,
Now turned upon the lovely Glendoveer,
Now on his heavenly home.

The affluence of imagery and gorgeousness of language here, and in other similar passages with which the poem abounds, is very imposing; and it is not to be denied that there is much of real descriptive power. Yet the glow that warms and colours the composition is perhaps more that of eloquence than of poetry; or, at least, it is something rather borrowed or caught by imitation, and applied to the purpose in hand by dint of labour or mere general talent, than coming out of any strong original and peculiar poetic genius. The imagery, with all its copiousness and frequent magnificence and beauty, is still essentially commonplace in spirit and character, however strange in form much of it may seem; any apparent freshness it has lies for the most part merely in its Orientalism; whenever it is not outlandish, it is trite and tame; so that in this way when it is most natural it is least striking, and whenever it is very striking it is unnatural. Neither has it much real variety; it is chargeable at least with mannerism, if not with monotony; nor does it commonly penetrate through and through the thought, but rather only decorates it on the outside like a dress or lackering. There is, in short, a good deal in this Indian poetry of Southey's that recalls the artificial point and sparkle of that of Darwin, though the glare is less brazen and oppressive, and the execution altogether much more skilful, as well as the spirit far larger and more genial. It is rightly remarked, however, by the author himself in the preface to the last edition which he superintended of his Curse of Kehama, that there is nothing Oriental in the style of the poem. By the style he here means simply the diction, including the verse. "I had learned," he adds, "the language of poetry from our own great masters and the great poets of antiquity." What of foreign inspiration, not derived from the common Greek and Latin sources, there was in Southey's poetry, he drew, not, like some of the most remarkable of his contemporaries, from the modern literature of Germany, but from the old ballad and romantic minstrels of Spain.

SCOTT.

Walter Scott, again, was never accounted one of the Lake poets; yet he, as well as Wordsworth and Coleridge, was early a drinker at the fountain of German poetry; his commencing

publication was a translation of Bürger's Lenore (1796), and the spirit and manner of his original compositions were, from the first, evidently and powerfully influenced by what had thus awakened his poetical faculty. His robust and manly character of mind, however, and his strong nationalism, with the innate disposition of his imagination to live in the past rather than in the future, saved him from being seduced into either the puerilities or the extravagances to which other imitators of the German writers among us were thought to have, more or less, given way; and, having soon found in the popular ballad-poetry of his own country all the qualities which had most attracted him in his foreign favourites, with others which had an equal or still greater charm for his heart and fancy, he henceforth gave himself up almost exclusively to the more congenial inspiration of that native minstrelsy. His poems are all lays and romances of chivalry, but infinitely finer than any that had ever before been written. With all their irregularity and carelessness (qualities which in some sort are characteristic of and essential to this kind of poetry), that element of life in all writing, which comes of the excited feeling and earnest belief of the writer, is never wanting; this animation, fervour, enthusiasm,—call it by what name we will,—exists in greater strength in no poetry than in that of Scott, redeeming a thousand defects, and triumphing over all the reclamations of criticism. It was this, no doubt, more than anything else, which at once took the public admiration by storm. All cultivated and perfect enjoyment of poetry, or of any other of the fine arts, is partly emotional, partly critical;* the enjoyment and appreciation are only perfect when these two qualities are blended; but most of the poetry that had been produced among us in modern times had aimed at affording chiefly, if not exclusively, a critical gratification. The Lay of the Last Minstrel (1805) surprised readers of all degrees with a long and elaborate poem, which carried them onward with an excitement of heart as well as of head which many of them had never experienced before in the perusal of poetry. The narrative form of the poem no doubt did much to produce this effect, giving

* See, in an article on the State of Criticism in France, in the British and Foreign Review, No. xxxii. (for January, 1844), a speculation on the distinction between these two states of feeling, which will be admitted to be ingenious, novel, and suggestive, even by those readers who do not go with the writer the whole length of his conclusions.

to it, even without the poetry, the interest and enticement of a novel; but all readers, even the least tinctured with a literary taste, felt also, in a greater or less degree, the charm of the verse, and the poetic glow with which the work was all alive. Marmion (1808) carried the same feelings to a much higher pitch; it is undoubtedly Scott's greatest poem, or the one at any rate in which the noblest passages are found; though the more domestic attractions of the Lady of the Lake (1810) made it the most popular on its first appearance. Meanwhile, his success, the example he had set, and the tastes which he had awakened in the public mind, had affected our literature to an extent in various directions which has scarcely been sufficiently appreciated. Notwithstanding the previous appearance of Wordsworth, Coleridge, Southey, and some other writers, it was Scott who first in his day made poetry the rage, and with him properly commences the busy poetical production of the period we are now reviewing; those who had been in the field before him put on a new activity, and gave to the world their principal works, after his appearance; and it was not till then that the writer who of all the poets of this age attained the widest blaze of reputation, eclipsing Scott himself, commenced his career. But what is still more worthy of note is, that Scott's poetry impressed its own character upon all the poetry that was produced among us for many years after: it put an end to long works in verse of a didactic or merely reflective character, and directed the current of all writing of that kind into the form of narrative. Even Wordsworth's Excursion (1814) is for the most part a collection of tales. If Scott's own genius, indeed, were to be described by any single epithet, it would be called a narrative genius. Hence, when he left off writing verse, he betook himself to the production of fictions in prose, which were really substantially the same thing with his poems, and in that freer form of composition succeeded in achieving a second reputation still more brilliant than his first.

We cannot make room for the whole of the battle in Marmion; and the following extracts, which describe the fighting, lose part of their effect by being separated from the picture of Marmion's death-scene, with the pathos and touching solemnity of which they are in the original canvas so finely intermingled and relieved; but, even deprived of the advantages of this contrast, most readers will probably agree with a late eloquent critic, that, "of

all the poetical battles which have been fought from the days of Homer, there is none comparable for interest and animation—for breadth of drawing and magnificence of effect—with this:"*—

Blount and Fitz-Eustace rested still
With Lady Clare upon the hill;
On which (for far the day was spent)
The western sun-beams now were bent.
The cry they heard, its meaning knew,
Could plain their distant comrades view:
Sadly to Blount did Eustace say,
"Unworthy office here to stay!
No hope of gilded spurs to-day.—
But see! look up—on Flodden bent,
The Scottish foe has fired his tent."
And sudden, as he spoke,
From the sharp ridges of the hill,
All downward to the banks of Till
Was wreathed in sable smoke.
Volumed and fast, and rolling far,
The cloud enveloped Scotland's war,
As down the hill they broke;
Nor martial shout, nor minstrel tone,
Announced their march; their tread alone,
At times one warning trumpet blown,
At times a stifled hum,
Told England, from his mountain throne
King James did rushing come.—
Scarce could they hear, or see, their foes
Until at weapon point they close.
They close, in clouds of smoke and dust,
With sword-sway, and with lance's thrust;
And such a yell was there
Of sudden and portentous birth,
As if men fought upon the earth
And fiends in upper air;
O life and death were in the shout,
Recoil and rally, charge and rout,
And triumph and despair.
Long looked the anxious squires; their eye
Could in the darkness nought descry.

At length the freshening western blast
Aside the shroud of battle cast.

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* Jeffrey, in Edinburgh Review.

And, first, the ridge of mingled spears
Above the brightening cloud appears;
And in the smoke the pennons flew,
As in the storm the white sea-mew.
Then marked they, dashing broad and far,
The broken billows of the war,
And plumed crests of chieftains brave,
Floating like foam upon the wave;
But nought distinct they see:
Wide raged the battle on the plain;
Spears shook and falchions flashed amain;
Fell England's arrow-flight like rain;
Crests rose, and stooped, and rose again,
Wild and disorderly.
Amid the scene of tumult, high
They saw Lord Marmion's falcon fly:
And stainless Tunstall's banner white,
And Edmund Howard's lion bright,
Still bear them bravely in the fight;
Although against them come
Of gallant Gordons many a one,
And many a stubborn Badenoch man,
And many a rugged border clan,
With Huntley, and with Home.

Far on the left, unseen the while,
Stanley broke Lennox and Argyle;
Though there the western mountaineer
Rushed with bare bosom on the spear,
And flung the feeble targe aside,
And with both hands the broadsword plied.
'Twas vain:—but Fortune, on the right,
With fickle smile cheered Scotland's fight.
Then fell that spotless banner white,
The Howard's lion fell;
Yet still Lord Marmion's falcon flew
With wavering flight, while fiercer grew
Around the battle-yell.
The Border slogan rent the sky!
A Home! a Gordon! was the cry:
Loud were the clanging blows;
Advanced,—forced back,—now low, now high,
The pennon sunk and rose;
As bends the bark's mast in the gale,
When rent are rigging, shrouds, and sail,
It wavered 'mid the foes.
No longer Blount the view could bear:
"By Heaven, and all its saints! I swear

I will not see it lost!
Fitz-Eustace, you with Lady Clare
May bid your beads, and patter prayer,—
I gallop to the host."
And to the fray he rode amain,
Followed by all the archer train.
The fiery youth, with desperate charge,
Made, for a space, an opening large,—
The rescued banner rose;—
But darkly closed the war around;
Like pine-tree, rooted from the ground,
It sunk among the foes.
Then Eustace mounted too, yet staid,
As loth to leave the helpless maid,
When, fast as shaft can fly,
Bloodshot his eyes, his nostrils spread,
The loose rein dangling from his head,
Housing and saddle bloody red,
Lord Marmion's steed rushed by;
And Eustace, maddening at the sight,
A look and sign to Clara cast,
To mark he would return in haste,
Then plunged into the fight.

. . . . .

The war, that for a space did fail,
Now trebly thundering swelled the gale,
And Stanley! was the cry:—
A light on Marmion's visage spread,
And fired his glazing eye:
With dying hand, above his head,
He shook the fragment of his blade,
And shouted "Victory!"—
"Charge, Chester, charge! On, Stanley, on!"
Were the last words of Marmion.

By this, though deep the evening fell,
Still rose the battle's deadly swell;
For still the Scots, around their king,
Unbroken, fought in desperate ring.
Where's now their victor vaward wing?
Where Huntley, and where Home?
O, for a blast of that dread horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
That to King Charles did come,
When Roland brave, and Olivier,
And every paladin and peer,
On Roncesvalles died!

Such blast might warn them, not in vain,
To quit the plunder of the slain,
And turn the doubtful day again,
While yet on Flodden side,
Afar, the Royal standard flies,
And round it toils, and bleeds, and dies
Our Caledonian pride!
In vain the wish—for far away,
While spoil and havoc mark their way,
Near Sybil's Cross the plunderers stray.—
"O lady," cried the Monk, "away!"
And placed her on her steed,
And led her to the chapel fair
Of Tilmouth upon Tweed.

. . . . . .

But, as they left the darkening heath,
More desperate grew the strife of death.
The English shafts in volleys hailed;
In headlong charge their horse assailed;
Front, flank, and rear the squadrons sweep
To break the Scottish circle deep,
That fought around their king:
But yet, though thick the shafts as snow,
Though charging knights like whirlwinds go,
Though billmen ply the ghastly blow,
Unbroken was the ring;
The stubborn spearmen still made good
Their dark impenetrable wood,
Each stepping where his comrade stood
The instant that he fell.
No thought was there of dastard flight;
Linked in the serried phalanx tight,
Groom fought like noble, squire like knight,
As fearlessly and well;
Till utter darkness closed her wing
O'er their thin host and wounded king.
Then skilful Surrey's sage commands
Led back from strife his shattered bands;
And from the charge they drew,
As mountain waves from wasted lands
Sweep back to ocean blue.
Then did their loss his foemen know;
Their king, their lords, their mightiest low,
They melted from the field as snow,
When streams are swollen and south winds blow,
Dissolves in silent dew.

Tweed's echoes heard the ceaseless plash,
While many a broken band,
Disordered, through her currents dash,
To gain the Scottish land;
To town and tower, to down and dale,
To tell red Flodden's dismal tale,
And raise the universal wail.
Tradition, legend, tune, and song
Shall many an age that wail prolong:
Still from the sire the son shall hear
Of the stern strife, and carnage drear,
Of Flodden's fatal field,
Where shivered was fair Scotland's spear,
And broken was her shield!

Scott, born in 1771, died in 1832.

CRABBE; CAMPBELL; MOORE.

Crabbe, Campbell, and Moore, were all known as poetical writers previous to the breaking forth of Scott's bright day: Crabbe had published his first poem, The Library, so far back as in 1781, The Village in 1783, and The Newspaper in 1785; Campbell, his Pleasures of Hope in 1799; Moore, his Anacreon in 1800. But Campbell alone had before that epoch attracted any considerable share of the public attention; and even he, after following up his first long poem with his Hohenlinden, his Battle of the Baltic, his Mariners of England, and a few other short pieces, had laid aside his lyre for some five or six years. Neither Crabbe nor Moore had as yet produced anything that gave promise of the high station they were to attain in our poetical literature, or had even acquired any general notoriety as writers of verse. No one of the three, however, can be said to have caught any part of his manner from Scott. Campbell's first poem, juvenile as its execution in some respects was, evinced in its glowing impetuosity and imposing splendour of declamation the genius of a true and original poet, and the same general character that distinguishes his poetry in its maturest form, which may be described as a combination of fire and elegance; and his early lyrics, at least in their general effect, are not excelled by anything he subsequently wrote, although the tendency of his style towards greater purity and simplicity was very marked in all his

later compositions. It was with a narrative poem—his Pennsylvanian Tale of Gertrude of Wyoming—that Campbell (in 1809) returned to woo the public favour, after Scott had made poetry, and that particular form of it, so popular; and, continuing to obey the direction which had been given to the public taste, he afterwards produced his exquisite O'Connor's Child and his Theodric; the former the most passionate, the latter the purest, of all his longer poems. Crabbe, in like manner, when he at last, in 1807, broke his silence of twenty years, came forth with a volume, all that was new in which consisted of narrative poetry, and he never afterwards attempted any other style. Narrative, indeed, had formed the happiest and most characteristic portions of Crabbe's former compositions; and he was probably led now to resume his pen mainly by the turn which the taste and fashion of the time had taken in favour of the kind of poetry to which his genius most strongly carried him. His narrative manner, however, it is scarcely necessary to observe, has no resemblance either to that of Scott or to that of Campbell. Crabbe's poetry, indeed, both in its form and in its spirit, is of quite a peculiar and original character. It might be called the poetry of matter-of-fact, for it is as true as any prose, and, except the rhyme, has often little about it of the ordinary dress of poetry; but the effect of poetry, nevertheless, is always there in great force, its power both of stirring the affections and presenting vivid pictures to the fancy. Other poets may be said to exalt the truth to a heat naturally foreign to it in the crucible of their imagination; he, by a subtler chemistry, draws forth from it its latent heat, making even things that look the coldest and deadest sparkle and flash with passion. It is remarkable, however, in how great a degree, with all its originality, the poetical genius of Crabbe was acted upon and changed by the growth of new tastes and a new spirit in the times through which he lived,—how his poetry took a warmer temperament, a richer colour, as the age became more poetical. As he lived, indeed, in two eras, so he wrote in two styles: the first, a sort of imitation, as we have already observed, of the rude vigour of Churchill, though marked from the beginning by a very distinguishing quaintness and raciness of its own, but comparatively cautious and commonplace, and dealing rather with the surface than with the heart of things; the last, with all the old peculiarities retained, and perhaps exaggerated, but greatly more copious, daring, and impetuous, and infinitely

improved in penetration and general effectiveness. And his poetical power, nourished by an observant spirit and a thoughtful tenderness of nature, continued to grow in strength to the end of his life; so that the last poetry he published, his Tales of the Hall, is the finest he ever wrote, the deepest and most passionate in feeling as well as the happiest in execution. In Crabbe's sunniest passages, however, the glow is still that of a melancholy sunshine: compared to what we find in Moore's poetry, it is like the departing flush from the west, contrasted with the radiance of morning poured out plentifully over earth and sky, and making all things laugh in light. Rarely has there been seen so gay, nimble, airy a wonder-worker in verse as Moore; rarely such a conjuror with words, which he makes to serve rather as wings for his thoughts than as the gross attire or embodiment with which they must be encumbered to render them palpable or visible. His wit is not only the sharpest and brightest to be almost anywhere found, but is produced apparently with more of natural facility, and shapes itself into expression more spontaneously, than that of any other poet. But there is almost as much humour as wit in Moore's gaiety; nor are his wit and humour together more than a small part of his poetry, which, preserving in all its forms the same matchless brilliancy, finish, and apparent ease and fluency, breathes in its tenderer strains the very soul of sweetness and pathos. Moore, after having risen to the ascendant in his proper region of the poetical firmament, at last followed the rest into the walk of narrative poetry, and produced his Lalla Rookh (1817): it is a poem, with all its defects, abounding in passages of great beauty and splendour; but his Songs are, after all, probably, the compositions for which he will be best remembered.

No poetry of this time is probably so deeply and universally written upon the popular heart and memory as Campbell's great lyrics; these, therefore, it is needless to give here; some things that he has written in another style will have a greater chance of being less familiar to the reader. With all his classic taste and careful finish, Campbell's writing, especially in his earlier poetry, is rarely altogether free for any considerable number of lines from something hollow and false in expression, into which he was seduced by the conventional habits of the preceding bad school of verse-making in which he had been partly trained, and from which he emerged, or by the gratification of his

ear lulling his other faculties asleep for the moment; even in his Battle of the Baltic, for instance, what can be worse than the two lines—

> But the might of England flushed
> To anticipate the scene?

And a similar use of fine words with little or no meaning, or with a meaning which can only be forced out of them by torture, is occasional in all his early compositions. In the Pleasures of Hope, especially, swell of sound without any proportionate quantity of sense, is of such frequent occurrence as to be almost a characteristic of the poem. All his later poetry, however, is of much purer execution; and some of it is of exquisite delicacy and grace of form. A little incident was never, for example, more perfectly told than in the following verses:—

> The ordeal's fatal trumpet sounded,
> And sad pale Adelgitha came,
> When forth a valiant champion bounded,
> And slew the slanderer of her fame.
>
> She wept, delivered from her danger;
> But, when he knelt to claim her glove—
> "Seek not," she cried, "oh! gallant stranger,
> For hapless Adelgitha's love.
>
> "For he is in a foreign far land
> Whose arm should now have set me free;
> And I must wear the willow garland
> For him that's dead or false to me."
>
> "Nay! say not that his faith is tainted!"
> He raised his vizor—at the sight
> She fell into his arms and fainted;
> It was indeed her own true knight.

Equally perfect, in a higher, more earnest style, is the letter to her absent husband, dictated and signed by Constance in her last moments, which closes the tale of Theodric:—

> "Theodric, this is destiny above
> Our power to baffle; bear it then, my love!
> Rave not to learn the usage I have borne,
> For one true sister left me not forlorn;
> And, though you're absent in another land,
> Sent from me by my own well-meant command,
> Your soul, I know, as firm is knit to mine
> As these clasped hands in blessing you now join:

Shape not imagined horrors in my fate—
Even now my sufferings are not very great;
And, when your grief's first transports shall subside,
I call upon your strength of soul and pride
To pay my memory, if 'tis worth the debt,
Love's glorying tribute—not forlorn regret:
I charge my name with power to conjure up
Reflection's balmy, not its bitter, cup.
My pardoning angel, at the gates of heaven,
Shall look not more regard than you have given
To me; and our life's union has been clad
In smiles of bliss as sweet as life e'er had.
Shall gloom be from such bright remembrance cast?
Shall bitterness outflow from sweetness past?
No! imaged in the sanctuary of your breast,
There let me smile, amidst high thoughts at rest;
And let contentment on your spirit shine,
As if its peace were still a part of mine:
For, if you war not proudly with your pain,
For you I shall have worse than lived in vain.
But I conjure your manliness to bear
My loss with noble spirit—not despair;
I ask you by our love to promise this,
And kiss these words, where I have left a kiss,—
The latest from my living lips for yours."
Words that will solace him while life endures:
For, though his spirit from affliction's surge
Could ne'er to life, as life had been, emerge,
Yet still that mind, whose harmony elate
Rang sweetness even beneath the crush of fate,—
That mind in whose regard all things were placed
In views that softened them, or light that graced,—
That soul's example could not but dispense
A portion of its own blest influence;
Invoking him to peace and that self-sway
Which fortune cannot give, nor take away;
And, though he mourned her long, 'twas with such woe
As if her spirit watched him still below.

It is difficult to find a single passage, not too long for quotation, which will convey any tolerable notion of the power and beauty of Crabbe's poetry, where so much of the effect lies in the conduct of the narrative—in the minute and prolonged but wonderfully skilful as well as truthful pursuit and exposition of the course and vicissitude of passions and circumstances; but we will give so much of the story of the Elder Brother, in the Tales of

the Hall, as will at least make the catastrophe intelligible. We select this tale, among other reasons, for its containing one of those pre-eminently beautiful lyric bursts which seem to contrast so strangely with the general spirit and manner of Crabbe's poetry. After many years, the narrator, pursuing another inquiry, accidentally discovers the lost object of his heart's passionate but pure idolatry living in infamy:—

Will you not ask, how I beheld that face,
Or read that mind, and read it in that place?
I have tried, Richard, ofttimes, and in vain,
To trace my thoughts, and to review their train—
If train there were—that meadow, grove, and stile,
The fright, the escape, her sweetness, and her smile;
Years since elapsed, and hope, from year to year,
To find her free—and then to find her here!
But is it she?—O! yes; the rose is dead,
All beauty, fragrance, freshness, glory, fled;
But yet 'tis she—the same and not the same—
Who to my bower a heavenly being came;
Who waked my soul's first thought of real bliss,
Whom long I sought, and now I find her—*this*.
I cannot paint her—*something* I had seen
So pale and slim, and tawdry and unclean;
With haggard looks, of vice and woe the prey,
Laughing in languor, miserably gay:
Her face, where face appeared, was amply spread,
By art's warm pencil, with ill-chosen red,
The flower's fictitious bloom, the blushing of the dead:
But still the features were the same, and strange
My view of both—the sameness and the change,
That fixed me gazing, and my eye enchained,
Although so little of herself remained;
It is the creature whom I loved, and yet
Is far unlike her—would I could forget
The angel or her fall; the once adored
Or now despised! the worshipped or deplored!
"O! Rosabella!" I prepared to say,
"Whom I have loved;" but Prudence whispered, Nay,
And Folly grew ashamed—Discretion had her day.
She gave her hand; which, as I lightly pressed,
The cold but ardent grasp my soul oppressed;
The ruined girl disturbed me, and my eyes
Looked, I conceive, both sorrow and surprise.

. . . . . .

If words had failed, a look explained their style;
She could not blush assent, but she could smile:
Good heaven! I thought, have I rejected fame,
Credit, and wealth, for one who smiles at shame?
She saw me thoughtful—saw it, as I guessed,
With some concern, though nothing she expressed.
"Come, my dear friend, discard that look of care," &c.

. . . . . .

Thus spoke the siren in voluptuous style,
While I stood gazing and perplexed the while,
Chained by that voice, confounded by that smile.
And then she sang, and changed from grave to gay,
Till all reproach and anger died away.

"My Damon was the first to wake
The gentle flame that cannot die;
My Damon is the last to take
The faithful bosom's softest sigh:
The life between is nothing worth,
O! cast it from thy thought away;
Think of the day that gave it birth,
And this its sweet returning day.

"Buried be all that has been done,
Or say that nought is done amiss;
For who the dangerous path can shun
In such bewildering world as this?
But love can every fault forgive,
Or with a tender look reprove;
And now let nought in memory live,
But that we meet, and that we love."

And then she moved my pity; for she wept,
And told her miseries, till resentment slept;
For, when she saw she could not reason blind,
She poured her heart's whole sorrows on my mind,
With features graven on my soul, with sighs
Seen, but not heard, with soft imploring eyes,
And voice that needed not, but had, the aid
Of powerful words to soften and persuade.
"O! I repent me of the past;" &c.

. . . . . .

Softened, I said, "Be mine the hand and heart,
If with your world you will consent to part."
She would—she tried.—Alas! she did not know
How deeply-rooted evil habits grow:

She felt the truth upon her spirits press,
But wanted ease, indulgence, show, excess,
Voluptuous banquets, pleasures—not refined,
But such as soothe to sleep the opposing mind—
She looked for idle vice, the time to kill,
And subtle, strong apologies for ill.
And thus her yielding, unresisting soul
Sank, and let sin confuse her and control:
Pleasures that brought disgust yet brought relief,
And minds she hated helped to war with grief.

. . . . . .

I had long lost her; but I sought in vain
To banish pity;—still she gave me pain.

. . . . . .

——— There came at length request
That I would see a wretch with grief oppressed,
By guilt affrighted—and I went to trace
Once more the vice-worn features of that face,
That sin-wrecked being! and I saw her laid
Where never worldly joy a visit paid:
That world receding fast! the world to come
Concealed in terror, ignorance, and gloom;
Sin, sorrow, and neglect; with not a spark
Of vital hope,—all horrible and dark.—
It frightened me!—I thought, and shall not I
Thus feel?—thus fear?—this danger can I fly?
Do I so wisely live that I can calmly die?

. . . . . .

Still as I went came other change—the frame
And features wasted, and yet slowly came
The end; and so inaudible the breath,
And still the breathing, we exclaimed—'Tis death!
But death it was not: when indeed she died
I sat and his last gentle stroke espied:
When—as it came—or did my fancy trace
That lively, lovely flushing o'er the face?
Bringing back all that my young heart impressed!
It came—and went!—She sighed, and was at rest!

From Moore, whose works are more, probably, than those of any of his contemporaries in the hands of all readers of poetry, we will make only one short extract—a specimen of his brilliant Orientalism, which may be compared with the specimen of Southey's in a preceding page. Here is the exquisitely beautiful description in

the Fire Worshippers, the finest of the four tales composing Lalla Rookh, of the calm after a storm, in which the heroine, the gentle Hinda, awakens in the war-bark of her lover Hafed, the noble Gheber chief, into which she had been transferred from her own galley while she had swooned with terror from the tempest and the fight:—

How calm, how beautiful comes on
The stilly hour when storms are gone!
When warring winds have died away,
And clouds, beneath the dancing ray,
Melt off, and leave the land and sea
Sleeping in bright tranquillity—
Fresh as if day again were born,
Again upon the lap of morn!
When the light blossoms, rudely torn
And scattered at the whirlwind's will,
Hang floating in the pure air still,
Filling it all with precious balm,
In gratitude for this sweet calm:—
And every drop the thunder-showers
Have left upon the grass and flowers
Sparkles, as 'twere that lightning gem
Whose liquid flame is born of them!
When, 'stead of one unchanging breeze,
There blow a thousand gentle airs,
And each a different perfume bears,—
As if the loveliest plants and trees
Had vassal breezes of their own,
To watch and wait on them alone,
And waft no other breath than theirs!
When the blue waters rise and fall,
In sleepy sunshine mantling all;
And even that swell the tempest leaves
Is like the full and silent heaves
Of lovers' hearts when newly blest—
Too newly to be quite at rest!
Such was the golden hour that broke
Upon the world, when Hinda woke
From her long trance, and heard around
No motion but the water's sound
Rippling against the vessel's side,
As slow it mounted o'er the tide.—
But where is she?—her eyes are dark,
Are wildered still—is this the bark,
The same that from Harmozia's bay
Bore her at morn—whose bloody way

The sea-dog tracks?—No! strange and new
Is all that meets her wondering view.
Upon a galliot's deck she lies,
  Beneath no rich pavilion's shade,
No plumes to fan her sleeping eyes,
  Nor jasmin on her pillow laid.
But the rude litter, roughly spread
With war-cloaks, is her homely bed,
And shawl and sash, on javelins hung,
For awning o'er her head are flung.
Shuddering she looked around—there lay
  A group of warriors in the sun
Resting their limbs, as for that day
Their ministry of death were done;
Some gazing on the drowsy sea,
Lost in unconscious reverie;
And some, who seemed but ill to brook
That sluggish calm, with many a look
To the slack sail impatient cast,
As loose it flagged before the mast.

Crabbe, born in 1754, lived till 1832; Campbell, born in 1777, died in 1844; Moore, born in 1780, died in 1851.

Byron.

Byron was the writer whose blaze of popularity it mainly was that threw Scott's name into the shade, and induced him to abandon verse. Yet the productions which had this effect—the Giaour, the Bride of Abydos, the Corsair, &c., published in 1813 and 1814 (for the new idolatry was scarcely kindled by the two respectable, but somewhat tame, cantos of Childe Harold, in quite another style, which appeared shortly before these effusions), were, in reality, only poems written in what may be called a variation of Scott's own manner—Oriental lays and romances, Turkish Marmions and Ladies of the Lake. The novelty of scene and subject, the exaggerated tone of passion in the outlandish tales, and a certain trickery in the writing (for it will hardly now be called anything else), materially aided by the mysterious interest attaching to the personal history of the noble bard, who, whether he sung of Giaours, or Corsairs, or Laras, was always popularly believed to be "himself the great sublime

he drew," wonderfully excited and intoxicated the public mind at first, and for a time made all other poetry seem spiritless and wearisome; but, if Byron had adhered to the style by which his fame was thus originally made, it probably would have proved transient enough. Few will now be found to assert that there is anything in these earlier poems of his comparable to the great passages in those of Scott—to the battle in Marmion, for instance, or the raising of the clansmen by the fiery cross in the Lady of the Lake, or many others that might be mentioned. But Byron's vigorous and elastic genius, although it had already tried various styles of poetry, was, in truth, as yet only preluding to its proper display. First, there had been the very small note of the Hours of Idleness; then, the sharper, but not more original or much more promising, strain of the English Bards and Scotch Reviewers (a satirical attempt in all respects inferior to Gifford's Baviad and Mæviad, of which it was a slavish imitation); next, the certainly far higher and more matured, but still quiet and commonplace, manner of the first two cantos of Childe Harold; after that, suddenly the false glare and preternatural vehemence of these Oriental rhapsodies, which yet, however, with all their hollowness and extravagance, evinced infinitely more power than anything he had previously done, or rather were the only poetry he had yet produced that gave proof of any remarkable poetic genius. The Prisoner of Chillon and Parisina, The Siege of Corinth and Mazeppa, followed, all in a spirit of far more truth, and depth, and beauty than the other tales that had preceded them; but the highest forms of Byron's poetry must be sought for in the two last cantos of Childe Harold, in his Cain and his Manfred, and, above all, in his Don Juan. The last-mentioned extraordinary work is, of course, excluded by its levities and audacities from any comparison in which the moral element is taken into account with such poems as Young's Night Thoughts and Cowper's Task, or even with Thomson's Seasons or Wordsworth's Excursion; but looked at simply from an artistic point of view, and without reference to anything except the genius and power of writing which it manifests, it will be difficult to resist its claim to be regarded as on the whole the greatest English poem that had appeared either in the present or in the preceding century. It is unfinished, indeed; but so are both the Canterbury Tales of Chaucer and the Fairy Queen of Spenser. Even what of it is objectionable on moral grounds may still be of

great literary brilliancy; and, at any rate, the merit of the rest would not be affected by what might be so excepted to. It contains abundance of poetry as exquisite as is to be found in any one of the other poetical works which were added to our literature within the period in question, and no other displays a poetic genius nearly so rich and various—so great in the most opposite kinds of writing, from the lightest play of wit and satire up to the noblest strains of impassioned song. We will quote only the letter of Julia to Juan in the First Canto, which may be compared with the letter of Constance in Campbell's Theodric, given a few pages back:—

"They tell me 'tis decided; you depart;
'Tis wise—'tis well, but not the less a pain;
I have no further claim on your young heart;
Mine is the victim, and would be again;
To love too much has been the only art
I used;—I write in haste, and, if a stain
Be on this sheet, 'tis not what it appears;
My eyeballs burn and throb, but have no tears.

"I loved, I love you, for this love have lost
State, station, heaven, mankind's, my own esteem,
And yet cannot regret what it hath cost,
So dear is still the memory of that dream;
Yet, if I name my guilt, 'tis not to boast;
None can deem harshlier of me than I deem;
I trace this scrawl because I cannot rest—
I've nothing to reproach, or to request.

"Man's love is of man's life a thing apart;
'Tis woman's whole existence;—man may range
The court, camp, church, the vessel, and the mart;
Sword, gown, gain, glory offer in exchange
Pride, fame, ambition, to fill up his heart,
And few there are whom these cannot estrange.
Men have all these resources, we but one,—
To love again, and be again undone.

"You will proceed in pleasure and in pride,
Beloved and loving many; all is o'er
For me on earth, except some years to hide
My shame and sorrow deep in my heart's core;
These I could bear, but cannot cast aside
The passion which still rages as before;
And so farewell—forgive me, love me—No,
That word is idle now, but let it go.

"My breast has been all weakness, is so yet;
But still I think I can collect my mind;
My blood still rushes where my spirits set,
As roll the waves before the settled wind;
My heart is feminine, nor can forget—
To all, except one image, madly blind;
So shakes the needle, and so stands the pole,
As vibrates my fond heart to my fixed soul.

"I have no more to say, but linger still,
And dare not set my seal upon this sheet;
And yet I may as well the task fulfil,
My misery can scarce be more complete;
I had not lived till now could sorrow kill:
Death shuns the wretch who fain the blow would meet,
And I must even survive this last adieu,
And bear with life to love and pray for you!"

Shelley.

Yet the highest poetical genius of this time, if it was not that of Coleridge, was, probably, that of Shelley. Byron died in 1824, at the age of thirty-six; Shelley in 1822, at that of twenty-nine. What Shelley produced during the brief term allotted to him on earth, much of it passed in sickness and sorrow, is remarkable for its quantity, but much more wonderful for the quality of the greater part of it. His Queen Mab, written when he was eighteen, crude and defective as it is, and unworthy to be classed with what he wrote in his maturer years, was probably the richest promise that was ever given at so early an age of poetic power, the fullest assurance that the writer was born a poet. From the date of his Alastor, or The Spirit of Solitude, the earliest written of the poems published by himself, to his death, was not quite seven years. The Revolt of Islam, in twelve cantos, or books, the dramas of Prometheus Unbound, The Cenci, and Hellas, the tale of Rosalind and Helen, The Masque of Anarchy, The Sensitive Plant, Julian and Maddalo, The Witch of Atlas, Epipsychidion, Adonais, The Triumph of Life, the translations of Homer's Hymn to Mercury, of the Cyclops of Euripides, and of the scenes from Calderon and

from Goethe's Faust, besides many short poems, were the additional produce of this springtime of a life destined to know no summer. So much poetry, so rich in various beauty, was probably never poured forth with so rapid a flow from any other mind. Nor can much of it be charged with either immaturity or carelessness: Shelley, with all his abundance and facility, was a fastidious writer, scrupulously attentive to the effect of words and syllables, and accustomed to elaborate whatever he wrote to the utmost; and, although it is not to be doubted that if he had lived longer he would have developed new powers and a still more masterly command over the several resources of his art, anything that can properly be called unripeness in his composition had, if not before, ceased with his Revolt of Islam, the first of his poems which he gave to the world, as if the exposure to the public eye had burned it out. Some haziness of thought and uncertainty of expression may be found in some of his later, or even latest, works; but that is not to be confounded with rawness; it is the dreamy ecstasy, too high for speech, in which his poetical nature, most subtle, sensitive, and voluptuous, delighted to dissolve and lose itself. Yet it is marvellous how far he had succeeded in reconciling even this mood of thought with the necessities of distinct expression: witness his Epipsychidion (written in the last year of his life), which may be regarded as his crowning triumph in that kind of writing, and as, indeed, for its wealth and fusion of all the highest things—of imagination, of expression, of music,—one of the greatest miracles ever wrought in poetry. In other styles, again, all widely diverse, are the Cenci, the Masque of Anarchy, the Hymn to Mercury (formally a translation, but essentially almost as much an original composition as any of the others). It is hard to conjecture what would have been impossible to him by whom all this had been done.

It will suffice to give one of the most brilliant and characteristic of Shelley's shorter poems—his Ode, or Hymn, as it may be called, To a Skylark, written in 1820:—

Hail to thee, blithe spirit,
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it,
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest;
Like a cloud of fire
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

In the golden lightning
Of the sunken sun,
O'er which clouds are brightening,
Thou dost float and run;
Like an embodied[1] Joy whose race is just begun.

---

[1] Undoubtedly the true word, though always perverted into *unbodied*,—as if a joy were a thing that naturally wore a body. The conception is of the same kind with what we have in the Witch of Atlas:—

"—— in that cave a dewy splendour hidden
Took shape and motion: with the living form
Of this embodied Power the cave grew warm."

As the dewy splendour, on taking shape and motion, is called an "embodied Power" in the one poem, so the lark, winging the blue sky like a cloud of fire, and floating in the evening sunlight, is called an "embodied Joy" in the other. In the preceding verse, too, very absurdly, the cloud of fire which the bird has become in the poet's imagination is, by the removal of the semicolon from its proper place at the end of the second line to the end of the third, represented, not as soaring in the blue deep of the sky, but as springing from the earth,—which is what nobody ever saw a cloud do, not a cloud of fire, or cloud glowing with coloured radiance, at any rate, and would besides give us as forced and false an image of a lark commencing its ascent as could well be put into rhyme, or into words,—striking, too, all its lustre out of what follows, and turning the climax into an anticlimax, by substituting for the splendid picture of the blue deep winged by the radiant cloud the statement of its being simply winged by something, we are not told what,—for the cloud of fire was only, according to this pointless pointing, the appearance that the bird presented (and which yet it never could have presented) when rising from the earth. These are two examples of the misprints that swarm more especially in so much of Shelley's poetry as was first given to the world in the edition brought out in 4 vols. under the care of his widow in 1839, and nearly all of which are repeated in the enlarged edition dated in the following year, notwithstanding we are told that in the latter some poems are presented "complete and correct" which had been till then "defaced by various mistakes and omissions." We have noted the following in the fourth volume of the first edition alone:—In the Witch of Atlas, at p. 10, for—

"Some weak and faint
With the soft burden of intensest bliss:
It is its work to bear"—

read,

"Some weak and faint
With the soft burden of intensest bliss
It is their work to bear."

At p. 12, for "And her thoughts were each a minister," read, probably,

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight,
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight,

"And her own thoughts," &c. At p. 28, for "And lived thenceforth as if some control," read "And lived thenceforward," &c.; and for "Was a green and overarching bower," read "Was as a green," &c. In the Epipsychidion,—to say nothing of the strange commencement, in which it is difficult not to suspect something wrong,—

"Sweet spirit! sister of that orphan one,
Whose empire is the name thou weepest on"—

we have at p. 66, "Though it is in the code," instead of "Though it is the code,"—as the line is correctly given on p. 319 of the one-volume edition in the first of a few fragments described as "Gleanings from Shelley's manuscript books and papers; preserved not only because they are beautiful in themselves, but as affording indications of his feelings and virtues;"—strangely enough, without its having been observed that this first fragment, in substance, and mostly in the same words, forms part of the Epipsychidion! At p. 76, in the same poem, we have the solitary misprint of the one edition which we find corrected in the other—"The blue Aegean girds" ludicrously corrupted into "The blue Aegean girls." In the Adonais, again, at p. 94, in the line "A wound more fierce than his tears and sighs," it is evident that something is wanting; perhaps it should be "Than were his tears and sighs." At p. 134, in the bridal song, read "Where strength and beauty met together kindle their image" (without the comma after *together*). At p. 140, we have certainly one misprint, if not two, in the three lines beginning "Pours itself on the plain, until wandering." At p. 144, we have the pretty, and prettily expressed, thought entitled "Good night" half obliterated by the manner in which the third line of the second verse is printed, "Be it not said, thought, understood," instead of "Be it not said, though understood." At p. 178, in a poem which does not seem to be given at all in the second edition, we have "Within an Elysium air" for "With an Elysium air" (if, indeed *Elysium* be the word); and at p. 180, in another, "Leave the naked to laughter" for "Leave thee naked" &c. At p. 183, in the lines on Keats, "Time's monthless torrent" is wrong of course; it should probably be "Time's smooth torrent." At p. 191, in the dramatic fragment entitled "Charles the First," "Scoffs at the stake" should apparently be "Scoffs at the state;" and at p. 193, "Against innocent sleep" should be "Against the innocent sleep." In the Triumph of Life, at p. 206, "And past in these performs" cannot be right; at p. 207 "Those deluded crew" should be "that deluded crew;" at p. 209 "Said my guide" should be "Said then my guide;" at p. 217 "Touched with faint lips the cup she raised" should probably be "Touched with my fainting lips," &c., and the line "Whilst the wolf from which they fled amazed" is evidently wrong; as is also the line "Under the crown which girt with empire" on p. 222. In the Hymn to Mercury, at p. 245, the line "And through the tortoise's hard strong skin" wants a word or a syllable somewhere; at p. 270, in the line "the lyre —be mine the glory giving it" the words should stand "the glory of giving it;" and lower down in the same page we should probably read

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear,
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflowed.

What thou art we know not:
What is most like thee?
From rainbow clouds there flow not
Drops so bright to see
As from thy presence showers a rain of melody.

Like a poet hidden
In the light of thought,
Singing hymns unbidden,
Till the world is wrought
To sympathy with hopes and fears it heeded not:

Like a highborn maiden
In a palace tower,

"But thou, who art as wise as thou art strong
To compass all that thou desirest, I
Present thee with," &c.

instead of "*Can* compass," with a full-point after "desirest." In the translation of the Cyclops, at p. 295, the line "I have stolen out, so that if you will" should probably run "So that now if you will;" and at p. 296, in the line "You think by some measure to despatch him," "measure" cannot be right. In the Scenes from the Magico Prodigioso, finally, at p, 314, the reading should be, apparently, "That which you know the best" (not "you know best"); at p. 316 "And you may not say that I allege" should probably be "And, that you may not," &c., with the strong point removed from the end of the following line; at p. 325 it should be "The whistling waves" (not "wave"); at p. 328 there is something wrong in

"And I have wandered o'er
The expanse of these wide wildernesses;"

and at p. 329 the line "'Twixt thou and me be, that neither fortune" is also certainly wrong, and should probably stand "'Twixt thou and me be set, that neither fortune." There may be many more instances of the same kind. On the other hand, the alterations in the second edition, some at least, are only additional blunders. One of the most flagrant occurs in the lines on Keats, already noticed, where, while the impossible nonsense of "Time's monthless torrent" is left untouched, the striking figure in the preceding line, "Death, the immortalizing writer," is actually *corrected* into "Death, the immortalizing winter!"

Soothing her love-laden
Soul in secret hour
With music sweet as love, which overflows her bower:

Like a glow-worm golden
In a dell of dew,
Scattering unbeholden
Its aërial hue
Among the flowers and grass, which screen it from the view:

Like a rose embowered
In its own green leaves,
By warm winds deflowered,
Till the scent it gives
Makes faint with too much sweet these heavy-winged thieves:

Sound of vernal showers
On the twinkling grass,
Rain-awakened flowers,
All that ever was
Joyous and clear and fresh, thy music doth surpass.

Teach us, sprite or bird,
What sweet thoughts are thine;
I have never heard
Praise of love or wine
That panted forth a flood of rapture so divine.

Chorus hymeneal,
Or triumphal chant,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt—
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want.

What objects are the fountains
Of thy happy strain?
What fields, or waves, or mountains?
What shapes of sky or plain?
What love of thine own kind? what ignorance of pain?

With thy clear keen joyance
Languor cannot be:
Shadow of annoyance
Never came near thee:
Thou lovest; but ne'er knew love's sad satiety.

Waking or asleep,
Thou of death must deem
Things more true and deep
Than we mortals dream,
Or how could thy notes flow in such a crystal stream?

We look before and after,
And pine for what is not;
Our sincerest laughter
With some pain is fraught;
Our sweetest songs are those that tell of saddest thought.

Yet if we could scorn
Hate, and pride, and fear;
If we were things born
Not to shed a tear,
I know not how thy joy we ever should come near.

Better than all measures
Of delightful sound,
Better than all treasures
That in books are found,
Thy skill to poet were, thou scorner of the ground!

Teach me half the gladness
That thy brain must know,
Such harmonious madness
From my lips would flow,
The world should listen then, as I am listening now.

KEATS.

Keats, born in 1796, died the year before Shelley, and, of course, at a still earlier age. But his poetry is younger than Shelley's in a degree far beyond the difference of their years. He was richly endowed by nature with the poetical faculty, and all that he has written is stamped with originality and power; it is probable, too, that he would soon have supplied, as far as was necessary or important, the defects of his education, as indeed he had actually done to a considerable extent, for he was full of ambition as well as genius; but he can scarcely be said to have given full assurance by anything he has left that he would in time have produced a great poetical work. The character of his mental constitution, explosive and volcanic, was adverse to every kind of restraint and cultivation; and his poetry is a tangled forest, beautiful indeed and glorious with many a majestic oak and sunny glade, but still with the unpruned, untrained savagery everywhere, constituting, apparently, so much of its essential character as to be inseparable from it, and indestructible

without the ruin at the same time of everything else. There is not only the absence of art, but a spirit antagonistic to that of art. Yet this wildness and turbulence may, after all, have been only an affluence of true power too great to be soon or easily brought under regulation,—the rankness of a tropic vegetation, coming of too rich a soil and too much light and heat. Certainly to no one of his contemporaries had been given more of passionate intensity of conception (the life of poetry) than to Keats. Whatever he thought or felt came to him in vision, and wrapped and thrilled him. Whatever he wrote burns and blazes. And his most wanton extravagances had for the most part a soul of good in them. His very affectations were mostly prompted by excess of love and reverence. In his admiration and worship of our Elizabethan poetry he was not satisfied without mimicking the obsolete syllabication of the language which he found there enshrined, and, as he conceived, consecrated. Even the most remarkable of all the peculiarities of his manner—the extent, altogether, we should think, without a parallel in our literature, to which he surrenders himself in writing to the guidance of the mere wave of sound upon which he happens to have got afloat, often, one would almost say, making ostentation of his acquiescence and passiveness—is a fault only in its excess, and such a fault, moreover, as only a true poet could run into. Sound is of the very essence of song; and the music must always in so far guide the movement of the verse, as truly as it does that of the dance. It only is not the all in all. If the musical form be the mother of the verse, the sense to be expressed is the father. Yet Keats, by what he has thus produced in blind obedience to the tune that had taken possession of him—allowing the course of the composition to be directed simply by the rhyme sometimes for whole pages—has shown the same sensibility to the musical element in poetry, and even something of the same power of moulding language to his will, which we find in all our greatest poets—in Spenser especially, whose poetry is ever as rich with the charm of music as with that of picture, and who makes us feel in so many a victorious stanza that there is nothing his wonder-working mastery over words cannot make them do for him. Keats's Endymion was published in 1817; his Lamia,* Isabella, Eve of St.

* "If any one," Leigh Hunt has said, "could unite the vigour of Dryden with the ready and easy variety of pause in the works of the late Mr. Crabbe

Agnes, and the remarkable fragment, Hyperion, together in 1820, a few months before his death. The latter volume also contained several shorter pieces, one of which, of great beauty, the Ode to a Nightingale, may serve as a companion to Shelley's Skylark:—

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
  My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
  One minute past, and Lethe-ward had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
  But being too happy in thine happiness,—
  That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
    In some melodious plot
  Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
  Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

O for a draught of vintage that hath been
  Cooled a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
  Dance, and Provençal song, and sun-burnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
  Full of the true, the blissful Hippocrene,
  With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
    And purple-stained mouth;
  That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
  And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
  What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
  Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs;
  Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
  Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
    And leaden-eyed despairs;
  Where beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
  Or new love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
  Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
  Though the dull brain perplexes and retards!

---

and the lovely poetic consciousness in the *Lamia* of Keats, in which the lines seem to take pleasure in the progress of their own beauty, like sea-nymphs luxuriating through the water, he would be a perfect master of rhyming heroic verse."

Already with thee! Tender is the night,
And haply the Queen-moon is on her throne,
Clustered around by all her starry fays;
But here there is no light
Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But in embalmed darkness guess each sweet
Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
Fast-fading violets, covered up in leaves;
And mid-day's eldest child,
The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

Darkling I listen, and, for many a time,
I have been half in love with easeful Death,[1]
Called him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
To seize upon the midnight with no pain,
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
In such an ecstasy!
Still would'st thou sing, and I have ears in vain—
To thy high requiem become a sod.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
In ancient days by emperor and clown;
Perhaps the self-same song hath found a path
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
The same that oft-times hath
Charmed magic casements, opening on the foam
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

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[1] Shelley had probably this line in his ear, when in the Preface to his Adonais, which is an elegy on Keats, he wrote—describing "the romantic and lonely cemetery of the Protestants" at Rome, where his friend was buried—"The cemetery is an open space among the ruins, covered in winter with violets and daisies. It might make one in love with death, to think that one should be buried in so sweet a place."

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
To toll me back from thee to my soul's self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
As she is famed to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
In the next valley-glades:
Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
Fled is that music:—do I wake or sleep?

Hunt.

These last names can hardly be mentioned without suggesting another—that of one who has only the other day been taken from us. Leigh Hunt, the friend of Shelley and Keats, had attracted the attention of the world by much that he had done, both in verse and prose, long before the appearance of either. His Story of Rimini, published in 1816, being, as it was, indisputably the finest inspiration of Italian song that had yet been heard in our modern English literature, had given him a place of his own as distinct as that of any other poetical writer of the day. Whatever may be thought of some peculiarities in his manner of writing, nobody will now be found to dispute either the originality of his genius, or his claim to the title of a true poet. Into whatever he has written he has put a living soul; and much of what he has produced is brilliant either with wit and humour, or with tenderness and beauty. In some of the best of his pieces too there is scarcely to be found a trace of anything illegitimate or doubtful in the matter of diction or versification. Where, for example, can we have more unexceptionable English than in the following noble version of the Eastern Tale?—

There came a man, making his hasty moan,
Before the Sultan Mahmoud on his throne,
And crying out—"My sorrow is my right,
And I *will* see the Sultan, and to-night."
"Sorrow," said Mahmoud, "is a reverend thing;
I recognise its right, as king with king;
Speak on." "A fiend has got into my house,"
Exclaimed the staring man, "and tortures us;

One of thine officers—he comes, the abhorred,
And takes possession of my house, my board,
My bed :—I have two daughters and a wife,
And the wild villain comes, and makes me mad with life."
"Is he there now?" said Mahmoud :—"No ; he left
The house when I did, of my wits bereft ;
And laughed me down the street, because I vowed
I 'd bring the prince himself to lay him in his shroud.
I 'm mad with want—I 'm mad with misery,
And, oh thou Sultan Mahmoud, God cries out for thee!"

The Sultan comforted the man, and said,
"Go home, and I will send thee wine and bread"
(For he was poor), "and other comforts. Go :
And, should the wretch return, let Sultan Mahmoud know."

In three days' time, with haggard eyes and beard,
And shaken voice, the suitor re-appeared,
And said, "He 's come."—Mahmoud said not a word,
But rose and took four slaves, each with a sword,
And went with the vexed man. They reach the place,
And hear a voice, and see a female face,
That to the window fluttered in affright :
"Go in," said Mahmoud, "and put out the light ;
But tell the females first to leave the room ;
And, when the drunkard follows them, we come."

The man went in. There was a cry, and hark!
A table falls, the window is struck dark :
Forth rush the breathless women ; and behind
With curses comes the fiend in desperate mind.
In vain : the sabres soon cut short the strife,
And chop the shrieking wretch, and drink his bloody life.

"Now *light* the light," the Sultan cried aloud.
'Twas done ; he took it in his hand, and bowed
Over the corpse, and looked upon the face ;
Then turned and knelt beside it in the place,
And said a prayer, and from his lips there crept
Some gentle words of pleasure, and he wept.

In reverent silence the spectators wait,
Then bring him at his call both wine and meat ;
And when he had refreshed his noble heart,
He bade his host be blest, and rose up to depart.

The man amazed, all mildness now, and tears,
Fell at the Sultan's feet, with many prayers,
And begged him to vouchsafe to tell his slave
The reason, first, of that command he gave

About the light; then, when he saw the face,
Why he knelt down; and lastly, how it was
That fare so poor as his detained him in the place.

The Sultan said, with much humanity,
"Since first I saw thee come, and heard thy cry,
I could not rid me of a dread, that one
By whom such daring villanies were done
Must be some lord of mine, perhaps a lawless son.
Whoe'er he was, I knew my task, but feared
A father's heart, in case the worst appeared;
For this I had the light put out; but when
I saw the face, and found a stranger slain,
I knelt, and thanked the sovereign arbiter,
Whose work I had performed through pain and fear;
And then I rose, and was refreshed with food,
The first time since thou cam'st, and marr'dst my solitude."

Other short pieces in the same style are nearly as good—such as those entitled The Jaffar and The Inevitable. Then there are the admirable modernizations of Chaucer—of whom and of Spenser, whom he has also imitated with wonderful cleverness, no one of all his contemporaries probably had so true and deep a feeling as Hunt. But, passing over likewise his two greatest works, The Story of Rimini and The Legend of Florence (published in 1840), we will give one other short effusion, which attests, we think, as powerfully as anything he ever produced, the master's triumphant hand, in a style which he has made his own, and in which, with however many imitators, he has no rival:—

THE FANCY CONCERT.

They talked of their concerts, their singers, and scores,
And pitied the fever that kept me in doors;
And I smiled in my thought, and said, "O ye sweet fancies,
And animal spirits, that still in your dances
Come bringing me visions to comfort my care,
Now fetch me a concert,—imparadise air."

Then a wind, like a storm out of Eden, came pouring
Fierce into my room, and made tremble the flooring,
And filled, with a sudden impetuous trample
Of heaven, its corners; and swelled it to ample
Dimensions to breathe in, and space for all power;
Which falling as suddenly, lo! the sweet flower
Of an exquisite fairy-voice opened its blessing;
And ever and aye, to its constant addressing,

There came, falling in with it, each in the last,
Flageolets one by one, and flutes blowing more fast,
And hautboys and clarinets, acrid of reed,
And the violin, smoothlier sustaining the speed
As the rich tempest gathered, and buz-ringing moons
Of tambours, and huge basses, and giant bassoons;
And the golden trombonë, that darteth its tongue
Like a bee of the gods; nor was absent the gong,
Like a sudden fate-bringing oracular sound
Of earth's iron genius, burst up from the ground,
A terrible slave come to wait on his masters
The gods, with exultings that clanged like disasters;
And then spoke the organs, the very gods they,
Like thunders that roll on a wind-blowing day;
And, taking the rule of the roar in their hands,
Lo! the Genii of Music came out of all lands;
And one of them said, "Will my lord tell his slave
What concert 'twould please his Firesideship to have?"

Then I said, in a tone of immense will and pleasure,
"Let orchestras rise to some exquisite measure;
And let their be lights and be odours; and let
The lovers of music serenely be set;
And then, with their singers in lily-white stoles,
And themselves clad in rose-colour, fetch me the souls
Of all the composers accounted divinest,
And, with their own hands, let them play me their finest."

Then, lo! was performed my immense will and pleasure,
And orchestras rose to an exquisite measure;
And lights were about me and odours; and set
Were the lovers of music, all wondrously met;
And then, with their singers in lily-white stoles,
And themselves clad in rose-colour, in came the souls
Of all the composers accounted divinest,
And, with their own hands, did they play me their finest.

Oh! truly was Italy heard then, and Germany,
Melody's heart, and the rich brain of harmony;
Pure Paisiello, whose airs are as new
Though we know them by heart, as May-blossoms and dew;
And nature's twin son, Pergolesi; and Bach,
Old father of fugues, with his endless fine talk;
And Gluck, who saw gods; and the learned sweet feeling
Of Haydn; and Winter, whose sorrows are healing;
And gentlest Corelli, whose bowing seems made
For a hand with a jewel; and Handel, arrayed
In Olympian thunders, vast lord of the spheres,
Yet pious himself, with his blindness in tears,

A lover withal, and a conqueror, whose marches
Bring demi-gods under victorious arches;
Then Arne, sweet and tricksome; and masterly Purcell,
Lay-clerical soul; and Mozart universal,
But chiefly with exquisite gallantries found,
With a grove in the distance of holier sound;
Nor forgot was thy dulcitude, loving Sacchini;
Nor love, young and dying, in shape of Bellini;
Nor Weber, nor Himmel, nor Mirth's sweetest name,
Cimarosa; much less the great organ-voiced fame
Of Marcello, that hushed the Venetian sea;
And strange was the shout, when it wept, hearing thee,
Thou soul full of grace as of grief, my heart-cloven,
My poor, my most rich, my all-feeling Beethoven.
O'er all, like a passion, great Pasta was heard,
As high as her heart, that truth-uttering bird;
And Banti was there; and Grassini, that goddess!
Dark, deep-toned, large, lovely, with glorious boddice;
And Mara; and Malibran, stung to the tips
Of her fingers with pleasure; and rich Fodor's lips
And, manly in face as in tone, Angrisani;
And Naldi, thy whim; and thy grace, Tramezzani;
And was it a voice?—or what was it?—say—
That, like a fallen angel beginning to pray,
Was the soul of all tears and celestial despair!
Paganini it was, 'twixt his dark-flowing hair.

So now we had instrument, now we had song—
Now chorus, a thousand-voiced one-hearted throng;
Now pauses that pampered resumption, and now—
But who shall describe what was played us, or how?
'Twas wonder, 'twas transport, humility, pride;
'Twas the heart of the mistress that sat by one's side;
'Twas the graces invisible, moulding the air
Into all that is shapely, and lovely, and fair,
And running our fancies their tenderest rounds
Of endearments and luxuries, turned into sounds;
'Twas argument even, the logic of tones;
'Twas memory, 'twas wishes, 'twas laughters, 'twas moans;
'Twas pity and love, in pure impulse obeyed;
'Twas the breath of the stuff of which passion is made.

And these are the concerts I have at my will;
Then dismiss them, and patiently think of your "bill."—
(*Aside*) Yet Lablache, after all, makes me long to go, still.

Leigh Hunt died, at the age of seventy-five, in 1859,—the last survivor, although the earliest born, of the four poets, with the

other three of whom he had been so intimately associated, and the living memory of whom he thus carried far into another time, indeed across an entire succeeding generation.* To the last, even in outward form, he forcibly recalled Shelley's fine picture of him in his Elegy on Keats, written nearly forty years before:—

> "What softer voice is hushed over the dead?
> Athwart what brow is that dark mantle thrown?
> What form leans sadly o'er the white death-bed,
> In mockery of monumental stone,
> The heavy heart heaving without a moan?
> If it be he, who, gentlest of the wise,
> Taught, soothed, loved, honoured the departed one;
> Let me not vex, with inharmonious sighs,
> The silence of that heart's accepted sacrifice."

Other Poetical Writers of the Earlier Part of the Nineteenth Century.

The names that have been mentioned are the chief of those belonging, wholly or principally, to the earlier part of the present century, or to that remarkable literary era which may be regarded as having expired with the reign of the last of the Georges. Many others, however, also brighten this age of our poetical literature, which cannot be here enlarged upon, and some of which, indeed, have been already noticed:—Samuel Rogers, whose first publication, as has been recorded in a preceding page, appeared so long ago as the year 1786, and who died, at the age of ninety-two, only in 1855, after having produced his Pleasures of Memory in 1792, his Human Life in 1819, and his Italy in 1822, all characterized by a spirit of pensive tenderness, as well as by high finish; the Reverend W. Lisle Bowles, who, born in 1762, lived till 1850, and whose Fourteen Sonnets, his first publication, which appeared in 1793, were regarded alike by Coleridge, by Wordsworth, and by Southey, as having not only materially contributed to mould their own poetry, but heralded or even kindled the dawn of

* Hunt—Byron—Shelley—Keats, born in that order (in 1784, 1788, 1793, and 1796), died in exactly the reverse, and also at ages running in a series contrary throughout to that of their births;—Keats, at 25, in 1821,—Shelley, at 29, in 1822,—Byron, at 36, in 1824,—Hunt, at 75, in 1859.

a new poetic day; Charles Lamb (b. 1775, d. 1835), whose earliest verses were published in 1797, at Bristol, along with those of their common friend Charles Lloyd, in the second edition of Coleridge's Poems (of which the first edition had appeared at London in the preceding year); the Rev. William Sotheby, whose translation of Wieland's Oberon, which appeared in 1798, was followed by a long succession of other works, both in rhyme and in blank verse, including translations of Virgil's Georgics and of the two great Homeric epics, and all distinguished by the combination of a flowing ease with a scholarly correctness, coming down to his death, at the age of seventy-seven, in 1833; Henry Kirke White, who, after putting forth some blossoms of fancy of considerable promise, was cut off, in his twenty-first year, in 1806; James Montgomery (b. 1771, d. 1854), whose Wanderer of Switzerland (1806), West Indies (1810), World before the Flood (1813), Greenland (1819), and Pelican Island (1827), with many minor pieces, always satisfying us by their quiet thoughtfulness and simple grace, made him with a large class of readers the most acceptable poetical writer of his time; Bernard Barton, the Quaker poet, whose first volume of verse, not of a striking character, but yet not wanting either in cordiality of feeling or grace of manner, appeared in 1820; James Grahame (b. 1765, d. 1811), best known as the author of The Sabbath, originally published without his name in 1804, but whose Birds of Scotland, which followed in 1806, and his British Georgics in 1809, have also been highly praised for the truth and vividness, though in a style simple sometimes to homeliness, of their pictures of natural objects and scenery,—among others, James Montgomery going so far as to declare that, although his readers may be few, yet "whoever does read him will probably be oftener surprised into admiration than in the perusal of any one of his contemporaries;" John Leyden, whose philological as well as poetic ardour, and sudden extinction in the midst of his career (at Batavia, in 1811, at the age of thirty-six), have been sung by Scott:—

> Quenched is that lamp of varied lore,
> That loved the light of song to pour;
> A distant and a deadly shore
> Has Leyden's cold remains:—

the Rev. Charles Wolfe (b. 1791, d. 1823), an Irishman, the writer of the famous lines on the death of Sir John Moore, first

given to the world in 1817; Reginald Heber, whose fine prize poem of Palestine was produced in 1803, and who held the bishopric of Calcutta from 1823 till his lamented death, at the age of forty-three, in 1826; the Hon. and Rev. William Herbert (b. 1778, d. 1847), whose elegant and spirited Translations from the Norse appeared in 1806, and his original poems of Helga and Attila in 1815 and 1838; Robert Bloomfield (b. 1766, d. 1823), the self-taught author of The Farmer's Boy, first published in 1798, and of other pieces full of truth to nature and also not without something of conventional cultivation; John Clare, the Northamptonshire peasant, born in 1793, whose first volume of Poems descriptive of Rural Life and Scenery appeared in 1820, and his Village Minstrel and other Poems, in two volumes, the year following, showing less indebtedness to books and more originality than Bloomfield; Hector M'Neill (b. 1746, d. 1818), who wrote only in his native Scottish dialect, but acquired great popularity among his countrymen, more especially by his Will and Jean, first published in 1795; Robert Tannahill (b. 1774, d. 1810), some of whose Scottish songs have almost the sweetness and pathos, though none of the fire, of those of Burns; James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd, as he was commonly called (b. 1772, d. 1835), who first made himself known by a volume of poems published in 1801, from which date his irregular but affluent and vigorous genius continued to pour forth both verse and prose at an accelerating rate as long as he lived, and whose Queen's Wake, produced in 1813, would, if he had never written anything else, have placed him perhaps at the head of the second or merely imitative class of the uneducated poets of Scotland—far, indeed, below Burns, but above Allan Ramsay; his countryman Allan Cunningham (b. 1784, d. 1842), the author of many clever songs, also, however, all of an imitative character, as well as an expert and voluminous writer in prose; William Tennant (b. 1774, d. 1848), another Scotsman, whose bright and airy Anster Fair appeared in 1812; John Wilson (b. 1788, d. 1855), the renowned Christopher North of Blackwood's Magazine, whose potent pen was wielded chiefly in prose eloquence, of every variety, from the most reckless comedy and satire to the loftiest heights of description, criticism, and declamatory denunciation, but who first became known by his two poems of The Isle of Palms, published in 1812, and The City of the Plague, in 1816, both rich in passages of tender and dreamy beauty; the late Lord

Strangford, the translator of the minor poems of Camoens (1803); the late Lord Thurlow, the author of various volumes of verse, the earliest of which appeared in 1812; Matthew Gregory Lewis (b. 1773, d. 1818), whose Tales of Wonder appeared in 1801, and whose skill in the management of the supernatural and showy versification are still familiar to all readers in his tale of Alonzo the Brave and the Fair Imogene; the Right Hon. John Hookham Frere, notable for his metrical version in the English of the fourteenth century, first published in Ellis's Specimens of the Poets, of the Anglo-Saxon Ode on Athelstan's Victory at Brunanburg, executed while he was a schoolboy at Eton—for a translation of almost unequalled merit from one of the old Spanish poetical romances, published (without his name) in Southey's Chronicle of the Cid (1808),—and for his Prospectus and Specimen of an intended National Work, by William and Robert Whistlecraft, &c., published (also anonymously) in 1817, which set the example of the new manner soon after adopted by Byron in his Beppo and Don Juan,—to say nothing of his translations from Aristophanes and other Greek poets, brought out at Malta, where he had long been resident, and where he died, at the age of seventy-seven, in 1846; Sir Samuel Egerton Brydges, the first of whose many publications, both in verse and prose, a volume of Sonnets and other Poems, appeared in 1785, and who survived till 1837, cultivating literature throughout his long life always with enthusiasm, if at times with a somewhat eccentric and fantastic taste; Sir Martin Archer Shee, whose clever Rhymes on Art were first published soon after the commencement of the century; the brothers James and Horace Smith, the joint authors of the celebrated Rejected Addresses (1812), the happiest of modern *jeux d'esprit;* Thomas Pringle (b. 1788, d. 1834), whoses verses, "Afar in the desert I love to ride," descriptive of the life he had known in South Africa, and throbbing with the patriotic longings of the exile, were admired by Coleridge; the Rev. George Croly (b. in Dublin, 1780, d. in London, 1860), whose first poetical work, Paris in 1815, was followed by The Angel of the World, Gems from the Antique, and others, and whose verse, more especially in his shorter pieces, sometimes surprises us with sudden felicities, although in general, perhaps, in everything at least except the sound, rather too like prose, as his prose certainly too much resembles verse; Savage Landor, Milman, and Procter ("Barry Cornwall"),

who all still live and continue to write; Anster, whose most English of all our Fausts, published so long ago as 1835, will yet, it is to be hoped, be completed by an equally brilliant reproduction of the Second Part of the great German poem; Mrs. Barbauld (Anna Letitia Aikin, b. 1743, d. 1825), one of the most popular writers of her day, and the author of several volumes of careful and not inelegant verse, the first of which (her earliest publication) appeared in 1773; Mrs. Hunter (Anne Home, b. 1742, d. 1821), the wife of the great anatomist, whose widow, however, she had been for many years when she published in 1806 the first collection of her poems, which are radiant with no common lyrical beauty, and several of which still retain their hold of the national ear and heart; her husband's niece, Joanna Baillie (b. 1762, d. 1851), all whose poetry is classical and graceful, but who is best known for her series of dramas on the Passions, the first volume of which was published in 1798, and among which the tragedies are probably, with all their deficiencies, the best ever written by a woman; Mrs. Tighe (Mary Blackford), an Irish lady, the subject of Moore's beautiful song, "I saw thy form in youthful prime" (she died, after years of suffering, in 1810, at the age of thirty-seven), and whose poem of Psyche, written in the Spenserian stanza, displays everywhere an imagination, immature, indeed, and wanting in vigour, but yet both rich and delicate, such as might have shone forth in Spenser himself if he had been a woman, or, as compared to that which we have in the Fairy Queen, something like what moonlight is to sunshine; Mrs. Grant (Anne Macvicar, b. 1754, d. 1838), best known through her Letters from the Mountains, and other prose works, but who began her literary career by the publication in 1803 of a volume of verse (Original Poems, with some Translations from the Gaelic); Mrs. Opie (Amelia Alderson), wife of Opie the painter, whom, however, she survived for nearly half a century, having died only in 1853, at the age of eighty-five, to be remembered chiefly, no doubt, for her exquisite Father and Daughter, and other prose works of fiction, but the authoress also of some very sweet and tender poetry; Mary Russell Mitford (b. 1789, d. 1855), whose popularity also in her latter days rested almost entirely on her prose writings, but who first attracted notice by several publications in verse, a volume of Poems in 1810, her Christina the Maid of the South Seas, in 1811, her Watlington Hill in 1812, and her Poems on the Female

Character the same year, besides her three tragedies of Julian (1823), Foscari (1826), and Rienzi (1828); Mrs. Hemans (Felicia Dorothea Browne), who, on the contrary, confined herself to verse, and was unquestionably the most of a born as well as of a trained poet of all the female writers of this period, and who scarcely ever allowed her pen to rest from the production of her first volume when she was only fifteen till her premature death in 1835, at the age of forty-one; and Letitia Elizabeth Landon (poor L. E. L.), who, after earning wide public favour by an untiring flow of occasional poetry, often full both of heart and of fancy, besides a long poem entitled The Improvisatrice, published in 1824, followed her in 1838 at that of thirty-six; to carry our enumeration no further. Some of those in this long list, indeed, may merit no higher designation than that of lively and agreeable versifiers; but others, even of this throng of minor voices, will be allowed to have received no stinted measure of the divine gift of song.

On the whole, this space of somewhat less than half a century, dating from the first appearance of Cowper and Burns, must be pronounced to be the most memorable period in the history of our poetical literature after the age of Spenser and Shakespeare. And if, in comparing the produce of the two great revivals, the one happening at the transition from the sixteenth century into the seventeenth, the other at that from the eighteenth into the nineteenth, we find something more of freshness, freedom, raciness, and true vigour, warmth, and nature, in our earlier than in our recent poetry, it is not to be denied, on the other hand, that in some respects the latter may claim a preference over the former. It is much less debased by the intermixture of dross or alloy with its fine gold — much less disfigured by occasional pedantry and affectation—much more correct and free from flaws and incongruities of all kinds. In whatever regards form, indeed, our more modern poetry must be admitted, taken in its general character, to be the more perfect; and that notwithstanding many passages to be found in the greatest of our elder poets which in mere writing have perhaps never since been equalled, nor are likely ever to be excelled; and notwithstanding also something of greater boldness with which their position enabled them to handle the language, thereby attaining sometimes a force and expressiveness not so much within the reach of their successors in our own day. The literary cultivation of the

language throughout two additional centuries, and the stricter discipline under which it has been reduced, may have brought loss or inconvenience in one direction, as well as gain in another; but the gain certainly preponderates. Even in the matter of versification, the lessons of Milton, of Dryden, and of Pope have no doubt been upon the whole instructive and beneficial; whatever of misdirection any of them may have given for a time to the form of our poetry passed away with his contemporaries and immediate followers, and now little or nothing but the good remains—the example of the superior care and uniform finish, and also something of sweetest and deepest music, as well as much of spirit and brilliancy, that were unknown to our earlier poets. In variety and freedom, as well as in beauty, majesty, and richness of versification, some of our latest writers have hardly been excelled by any of their predecessors; and the versification of the generality of our modern poets is greatly superior to that of the common run of those of the age of Elizabeth and James.

One remarkable distinction between the Elizabethan and the recent era is, that of the poetical produce of the latter a much more inconsiderable portion ran into the dramatic form. Coleridge, indeed, translated Wallenstein, and wrote his tragedies of Zapolya and Remorse: Scott (but not till after all his other works in verse) produced what he called his "dramatic sketch" of Halidon Hill, and his three-act plays of The Doom of Devorgoil and The Ayrshire Tragedy, in all of which attempts he seemed to be deserted both by his power of dialogue and his power of poetry: Byron, towards the close of his career, gave new proof of the wonderful versatility of his genius by his Marino Faliero, his Two Foscari, his Sardanapalus, and his Werner, besides his Manfred, and his mystery of Cain, in another style: and Shelley, in 1819, gave to the world perhaps the greatest of modern English tragedies in his Cenci. This, we believe, was nearly the sum total of the dramatic poetry produced by the more eminent poetical writers of the first quarter of the present century. The imitation of the old Elizabethan drama, of which we have since had so much, only began to become a rage after the day which these great names had illustrated began to decline. Joanna Baillie, indeed, as we have seen, had published the first volume of her Plays on the Passions so long ago as in 1798; and Lamb's tragedy of John Woodvil—which the Edinburgh Reviewers

profanely said might "be fairly considered as supplying the first of those lost links which connect the improvements of Æschylus with the commencement of the art"—appeared the same year; but it attracted little notice at the time, though both by this production, and much more by his Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, first published in 1808, Lamb had a principal share in reviving the general study and love of our early drama. Something probably was also done to spread the fashion of that sort of reading by the fictitious quotations from old plays which headed the chapters of several of the Waverley novels. But, perhaps, if we except Miss Baillie's plays, which came rather too early, the first dramatic work studiously composed in imitation of the language of the Elizabethan drama which, meeting the rising taste, excited general attention, was Mr. Milman's tragedy of Fazio, which appeared in 1815, and was followed by his Anne Boleyn, and several others in the same style.

Prose Literature.

Among the most distinguished ornaments of the prose literature of this recent era were some of the chief poetical writers of the time. Southey and Scott were two of the most voluminous prose writers of their day, or of any day; Coleridge also wrote much more prose than verse; both Campbell and Moore are considerable authors in prose; there are several prose pieces among the published works of Byron, of Shelley, and of Wordsworth; both Leigh Hunt and Wilson perhaps acquired more of their fame, and have given more wide-spread delight, as prose writers than as poets; Charles Lamb's prose writings, his golden Essays of Elia, and various critical papers, abounding in original views and the deepest truth and beauty, have made his verse be nearly forgotten. Among the other most conspicuous prose writers of the period we have been reviewing may be mentioned, in general literature and speculation, Sidney Smith, Hazlitt, Jeffrey, Playfair, Stewart, Alison, Thomas Brown; in political disquisition, Erskine, Cobbett, Mackintosh, Bentham, Brougham (alone, of so many, still preserved to us, with his laurels won in every field of intellectual contest, both mentally and physically one of the most *vital* of the sons of men);

in theological eloquence, Horsley, Wilberforce, Foster, Hall, Irving, Chalmers; in history, Fox, Mitford, Lingard, James Mill, Hallam, Turner; in fictitious narrative, Miss Edgeworth, Mrs. Opie, Miss Owenson (Lady Morgan), Mrs. Brunton, Miss Austen, Madame d'Arblay (Miss Burney), Godwin, Maturin. The most remarkable prose works that were produced were Scott's novels, the first of which, Waverley,* appeared in 1814. A powerful influence upon literature was also exerted from the first by the Edinburgh Review, begun in 1802; the Quarterly Review, begun in 1809; and Blackwood's Magazine, established in 1817.

Progress of Science.

A few of the most memorable facts connected with the progress of scientific discovery in England, during this period, may be very briefly noted. In astronomy Herschel continued to pursue his observations, commenced a short time before 1781, in which year he discovered the planet Uranus; in 1802, appeared in the Philosophical Transactions his catalogue of 500 new nebulæ and nebulous stars; in 1803 his announcement of the motions of double stars around each other; and a long succession of other important papers, illustrative of the construction of the heavens, followed down to within a few years of his death, at the age of eighty-four, in 1822. In chemistry, Davy, who had published his account of the effects produced by the respiration of nitrous oxide (the laughing gas) in 1800, in 1807 extracted metallic bases from the fixed alkalis, in 1808 demonstrated the similar decomposability of the alkaline earths, in 1811 detected the true nature of chloride (oxymuriatic acid), and in 1815 invented his safety lamp; in 1804 Leslie published his Experimental Enquiry into the Nature and Properties of Heat; in 1808 the Atomic Theory was announced by Dalton; and in 1814 its development and illustration were completed by Wollaston, to whom both chemical science and optics are also indebted for various other valuable services.

* With the second title of 'Tis Sixty Years Since, the work professing (in the Introductory Chapter) to have been written, as it really was in part, nine years before.

THE VICTORIAN AGE.

It sometimes happens that a new spirit, not in one thing but throughout almost the entire realm of opinion, so suddenly awakens, or at any rate reveals itself, in a country, that we might almost be tempted to suppose the population to have been changed to a man, and that the old Homeric similitude had been literally realized:—

> Man's generations come and go as come and go the leaves:
> This year's of life, wind-strewn on ground, the winter's cold bereaves;
> But spring brings forth the green again to crown another year;
> And so men too alternately grow up and disappear.

The effect is nearly the same as if this were indeed the way in which one generation is succeeded and displaced by another. The lead, at least, which is everything, has passed into new hands. Ideas of all kinds which had hitherto been quiescent or at a discount have all at once risen into the ascendant. Those, on the other hand, which had been wont to hold sway have fallen into discredit. The old traditions have lost their sacredness, and, if they still reign, no longer govern, or at any rate no longer govern alone, sitting enthroned in unquestioned supremacy. The river of thought has escaped from the plain, in which it had long flowed on with all the freedom that it desired or thought of, with all that it seemed to itself to need, and has gone impatiently in quest of other courses, though it should be to dash itself either over a precipice or against a mountain.

It is true that the passing away of what is old and the substi-

tution of something else is a process that is continually going on in human affairs. Change is incessantly at work even in the quietest times. But the change which sometimes takes place is like the rush of a mass of pent-up water when it has burst its barrier. No doubt, however, in all such cases the force which seems so suddenly to have aroused itself from slumber had been long preparing and gathering, and it is the opposition it has met with, the restraint under which it has for a time been kept down, that has made it at last so sweeping and irresistible.

Such a general breaking up of old ways of thinking and feeling very notably marked the completion of about the first third of the present century in these countries, if we should not say throughout a great part of Europe. The national change that is always best defined, and most conspicuous and indisputable, is a change in the government by the substitution whether of a new dynasty or even of only a new individual sovereign; and for this reason whatever other changes may happen about the same time are apt to be regarded as due to the action of that *primum mobile*. Nor may such a view of the matter be always wholly devoid of truth. Sometimes a change of the government or of the ruler of a country is only, like other visible changes, a sign or a consequence of the activity of forces at work beneath the surface of things, in the bosom of society and in the minds and hearts of men. It was so in France both when the elder branch of the Bourbons was expelled in 1830 and when the younger branch was expelled in 1848. But in England the termination of the reign of George IV., exactly a month before that of Charles X., was unconnected with anything in the preceding social condition of the country. And that change was probably not without considerable effect in aiding or facilitating the political and other social changes that followed it. At the least it was the removal of an impediment. It co-operated with the dynastic revolution that had taken place in France to put an end to the long domination of Toryism in England, and to bring about parliamentary reform, with all that has thence ensued. All these things, no doubt, would have happened at any rate;

but probably not when they did happen, not so soon, if it had not been for the change in the occupant of the throne. It is in this way that the exit of the last of the Georges, though not, it may be, properly speaking, the originating cause of much, is yet a great epoch, or marking event, both in our political history and in our social history generally.

Whatever beliefs and opinions become prevalent among a people will, of course, colour the national literature during the time of their predominance. Literature is the artistic expression in words of whatever men think and feel. It is the product of that. It is elaborated out of that, as honey is elaborated out of vegetable matter by the transmuting skill of the bee. The thought and feeling, indeed, may be that only of the particular writer. And the more original the genius of a writer, the greater will be the extent to which this is the case. He will mould his age more than he is moulded by it. He will give more than he receives. For all literature is more or less both an effect and a cause, both a product and a power. It both follows and leads. It takes an impulse from its age, and it also gives an impulse to its age. This latter is the function in the discharge of which exclusively all that any writer has of positive force, all of his mental faculty that is really his own or properly a portion of himself, is employed. We have, indeed, been lately told that it is a mistake to regard literature as having any share in promoting the progress of civilization. "It is evident," it seems, "that if a people were left entirely to themselves [whatever may be the meaning of that qualification], their religion, their literature, and their government would be, not the causes of their civilization, but the effects of it."* It might as well be denied that a lighted candle could ever enable us to see any better than would the simple wax or tallow, or whatever it may be, of which the candle was composed. But, although literature makes really the chief nutriment and life of civilization, it is a condition of all literature that would aspire to be immediately influential that it should sympathise to a considerable degree with the reigning

* Buckle's History of Civilization, i. 232.

spirit of its age. Indeed, whatever may be its character in other respects, literature cannot but always take something from the condition of society in which it has been produced, and out of which it has sprung, any more than a river, be it ever so self-willed and impetuous, can take any other course in the main than the one marked out for it by the natural disposition of the ground, or can altogether avoid reflecting the banks between which it flows.

But, besides the changes in its moral spirit to which it is thus liable in common with all the other products or expressions of the national mind, the literature of every country or language is subject also to transformations and revolutions of altogether another kind under the operation of principles or tendencies inherent in and peculiar to its own nature.

There is, for one thing, such change as takes place in the mere fashion of expression, in the words and in the senses in which they are used. This is merely a thing of the same kind with any change which might be introduced in the composition of the bronze employed in statuary, or of the stone or other material employed in architecture.* It belongs properly to the history not of the national literature but of the national language. Such changes are continually occurring; and, like everything appertaining to language, for the most part without being traceable to any deliberate contrivance or direct human agency. For almost as little can be done here by any effort of man as in directing the course of the wind, which "bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." It is a natural law not of our making, or a mystery into which we cannot penetrate. Of two words which have been equally long in the language and equally in familiar use, one shall continue to be employed by everybody and the other shall become obsolete; the one shall live, the other shall die; and in many or in most cases their respective fates could no more have been predicted than it could usually be predicted which was to die first of two men of equal age and both apparently in good health. Why a particular

phrase or vocable has dropped out of the language, or at least out of use, cannot even be always satisfactorily explained after the event. But when a word has thus fairly ceased, from whatever cause, to perform its proper functions, it would seem to be nearly as impossible to recall it to a really living or working condition as it is to raise the dead in any other case. Pope, indeed, has spoken of commanding "old words that long have slept to wake;" and, of course, any writer or speaker may employ antiquated terms to any extent that he pleases. But they may remain still as much asleep as ever for all that. They may be patronized by his disciples, imitators, and admirers. Yet they may have no power of taking root anew in the soil of the language. Perhaps, indeed, nothing else, any more than a word, that has once thus lost its hold of life can ever be really revived and rejuvenated. Let it be but such a thing as a fashion in dress; even in that what is called a restoration of the old is usually in fact a novelty in the main. Certain it is, at any rate, that very little of genuine revivification has ever been accomplished in human speech; you will sooner introduce into a language a hundred or a thousand new words than you will re-establish in the general acceptance ten old ones that have been for some time thrown aside. It would almost seem as if words too as well as we who use them were doomed to wither and decay with age, and all at one date or another to lie down and fall asleep in death. It may be observed, also, that, besides the many words which have actually perished and been forgotten, there is in every language a very large body of words which are either no longer used at all, or not in the senses which they formerly had, although they yet continue to be generally understood, and to be familiar to all persons of any reading or cultivation. Our own literature of two or three centuries back, much of which is still in the hands of everybody, presents such words in great numbers; above all, our English Bible is full of them. I have elsewhere remarked that "they are the veterans or *emeriti* of the language, whose regular term of active service is over, but who still exist as a reserve force or retired list, which may

always be called out on special occasions."* They might rather, perhaps, be imaged as the spirits of words departed, which sometimes, when solemnly invoked, revisit the scene in the affairs of which they once bore an active part.

Even so much of style or manner as is in the main, or in its general character, what a writer finds made to his hand rather than what he makes for himself, not his own invention but the product and property of his age, must deeply mark and colour the literature of a country throughout its whole course, and would alone always suffice to discriminate any one stage of it more or less clearly from every other. Probably in any language which has been long subjected to literary cultivation the style of every successive half-century could thus be detected by shades of difference altogether distinct from anything impressed by the peculiar genius of each writer. This is no more than is done in other departments of artistic production. An architectural structure belonging to the early part of the sixteenth century could hardly, it is presumed, be assigned by any competent judge to the latter part of the century. A portrait by Holbein is unmistakeably a work of the sixteenth century, and one by Vandyck as unmistakeably a work of the seventeenth. Neither artist would or could have painted exactly as he did if he had lived in the time of the other, or in any age except that in which he actually appeared.

The number of old words and old senses of words which have dropped out of the English language since so recent a date as the latter part of the last century is probably much more considerable than is commonly supposed. Nobody now calls civilization *civility;* but that is always Johnson's word; in none of his own editions even of his Dictionary does the other appear in the sense which it has now acquired, and for which it has come to be our only expression. We have lost or discarded, and scarcely found an equivalent for, a term employed by Burke in writing to Dr. Lawrence in 1797 (the year in which he died), when, speaking of a paper drawn up by him some years before only for his most intimate friends which had been surreptitiously printed,

* English of Shakespeare, 2nd edit. p. 196.

he says that there would have been many *temperaments* of its roughness and sharpness if he had designed it for general perusal. A year or two before we have Godwin, in his Caleb Williams, still repeatedly using the word *ingenuity* for what we now call ingenuousness, just as everybody did in the preceding century:—"Mr. Falkland, with great ingenuity and candour of mind;"* "while I was won over by your seeming ingenuity;"† though elsewhere we have also the word bearing its modern sense:—"It is not in the power of ingenuity to subvert the distinctions of right and wrong."‡ The number of new words, again, and of new applications of words, that have been introduced since the date in question is undoubtedly very great; and the recent adoption of many of them is probably in general quite unsuspected. Scientific terms, every one is aware, have been fabricated by hundreds and thousands; but the words and modes of expression referred to belong to the flesh and blood of the language, and are not fabricated, but rather grow, or are born, like ourselves. It might almost be said that among words too there is something like a succession of generations. Or the airy population is recruited by supplies drawn from other languages or other lands. The late Rev. Jonathan Boucher, the learned author of the Glossary, thus writes in the year 1800 in the Introduction to that work:—"The United States of America, too proud, as it would seem, to acknowledge themselves indebted to this country for their existence, their power, or their language, denying and revolting against the two first, are also making all the haste they conveniently can to rid themselves of the last. With little or no dialect, they are peculiarly addicted to innovations; but such as need not excite our envy, whether we regard their elegance or their propriety."§ And then he proceeds in a note to justify, as he says, what he has thus asserted, and to show by a few examples "collected from some of their recent publications," "how very poorly" the Americans "are qualified to set up for reformers of language." What are the Americanisms, as he

* Vol. i. p. 48 (2nd edit. 1796).
† Vol. ii. p. 155.
‡ Vol. ii. p. 188, and in other places.
§ Page xxiii.

calls them, which he produces? They are, the verb *to advocate*, the adjective or participle *demoralizing* and the substantive *demoralization*, the verb *to progress*, the substantive *grades*, the verb *to memorialize*, the use of *alone* for only (as in "the alone minister"), the adjectives *inimical* and *influential* (applied in a moral sense), the substantive *a mean*. These forms are now nearly all in universal currency among us; and with the exception of two, or at most three, have the air of having been as long in the language and of being as much its rightful property, or of as legitimate origin, as half the vocables composing it. Yet here we have them denounced at the beginning of the present century as having been all then newly imported, if indeed they had been yet actually imported, from a foreign soil where they had sprung up under the fostering heat of ignorance, presumption, and barbarism.*

There can be little doubt that some change has taken place in the current vocabulary of the language even within the last thirty or forty years; such a movement is what is always going on; so that the natural style of the year 1860 will not be quite the same with that of the year 1830 or 1820. The difference, though it may not be perceptible to us, may be clearly discerned by the critics of a future generation from their more advantageous point of view. Still, as has been said, this is a change that does not affect the literature of the country in anything really essential to it.

It is the same with whatever change may have taken place in

* The anti-republican zeal, however, of the reverend lexicographer would seem to have carried him too far in regard to some of these words. The verb *to advocate* is used by Milton; *to progress* (but with the accent on the first syllable, and perhaps only in his customary way of making a verb of any substantive) is used by Shakespeare ("This honourable dew That leisurely doth progress on thy cheeks," in King John, v. 2); of *inimical*, Walker says in his Pronouncing Dictionary, first published in 1772, "This word sprung up in the House of Commons about ten years ago, and has since been so much in use as to make us wonder how we did so long without it;" in his preface, too, he speaks of it as having been evidently omitted in Johnson's Dictionary "merely by mistake," along with *predilection*, *respectable*, *descriptive*, *sulky*, *interference*, and many others; and *a mean* belongs to a comparatively early stage of the language.

the general spirit of society. The religious element, the clerical element, the feminine element, the juvenile element, the zoological element, and the physical-science element in all its modifications, have each acquired a vast increase of influence within the last thirty years. "The proper study of mankind is man:" "On earth, there is nothing great but man; in man, there is nothing great but mind:"—these accepted faiths of the last age have had their dominion seriously weakened in the present by the passion that has seized so many persons for the study rather of boys and girls, of the lower animals, and of dead matter. But, although all this, of course, makes itself felt, like everything else that agitates our humanity, in the moral tone and temper of our literature, with its artistic character such changes of opinion and sentiment have nothing to do. We do not judge of the quality of a mirror by the objects which it reflects, but by the manner in which it reflects them.

1. The most conspicuous of the substantial distinctions between the literature of the present day and that of the first quarter or third of the century may be described as consisting in the different relative positions at the two dates of Prose and Verse. In the Georgian era verse was in the ascendant; in the Victorian era the supremacy has passed to prose. It is not easy for any one who has grown up in the latter to estimate aright the universal excitement which used to be produced in the former by a new poem of Scott's, or Byron's, or Moore's, or Campbell's, or Crabbe's, or the equally fervid interest that was taken throughout a more limited circle in one by Wordsworth or Southey or Shelley. There may have been a power in the spirit of poetry which that of prose would in vain aspire to. Probably all the verse ages would be found to have been of higher glow than the prose ones. The age in question, at any rate, will hardly be denied by any one who remembers it to have been in these countries, perhaps from the mightier character of the events and circumstances in the midst of which we were then placed, an age in which the national heart beat more strongly than it does at present in

regard to other things as well as this. Its reception of the great poems that succeeded one another so rapidly from the first appearance of Scott till the death of Byron was like its reception of the succession of great victories that, ever thickening, and almost unbroken by a single defeat, filled up the greater part of the ten years from Trafalgar to Waterloo—from the last fight of Nelson to the last of Wellington. No such huzzas, making the welkin ring with the one voice of a whole people, and ascending alike from every city and town and humblest village in the land, have been heard since then. An ingenious writer in one of the Magazines a few months ago—and not at all in jest but quite seriously—set himself to prove that the common notion of our having been at peace for forty years after 1815 was all a delusion; and he found no difficulty in filling some columns with a chronological enumeration of military expeditions and hostile operations of one kind and another in which we had been engaged in the course of that long space of time. But these petty wars were to the great war with Napoleon no more than what the little ordinary ailments from which almost every one occasionally suffers are to an invasion of disease which oppresses the whole system, and is from first to last a struggle between life and death. Such things are of those that are to be weighed, not counted—*haud numeranda, sed ponderanda*. You might as well reckon new farthings against old sovereigns as even Chinese and Crimean wars against that tremendous contest in which, sometimes standing alone against the world in arms, England fought, not for some point of foreign policy, but for her very existence. Victory there was not only glory and triumph, but deliverance from destruction. The difference was as great as between catching a pickpocket at your handkerchief and feeling a knife at your throat.

Of course, there was plenty of prose also written throughout the verse era; but no book in prose that was then produced greatly excited the public mind, or drew any considerable amount of attention, till the Waverley novels began to appear; and even that remarkable series of works did not succeed in at

once reducing poetry to the second place, however chief a share it may have had in hastening that result. Of the other prose writing that then went on what was most effective was that of the periodical press—of the Edinburgh Review and Cobbett's Register, and, at a later date, of Blackwood's Magazine and the London Magazine (the latter with Charles Lamb and De Quincey among its contributors)—much of it owing more or less of its power to its vehement political partisanship.

A descent from poetry to prose is the most familiar of all phenomena in the history of literature. Call it natural decay or degeneracy, or only a relaxation which the spirit of a people requires after having been for a certain time on the wing or on the stretch, it is what a period of more than ordinary poetical productiveness always ends in. Prose may be said to have originally sprung from poetry. Everywhere the earliest form of composition seems to have been verse. It was only after verse had done its work that prose was attempted in any department of knowledge or speculation. The first laws were in verse; the first philosophy was in verse; the first history of every kind, whether true or invented, was all in verse. The only Roman history, for example, that existed for many ages was contained, according to the commonly accepted theory, in songs and ballads. Not till the original high and soaring national spirit, and the creative and conquering genius which founded the state, had begun to sober down and give way, was writing in prose ever thought of. Then the verse and the music were thrown away or abandoned, and their place taken by prose, as bounding boyhood or visionary youth is transformed into thoughtful manhood, or as the rich and variegated colouring of dawn passes off into the common day-sky. Even the first national histories and chronicles in prose have usually been preceded by others equally or still more elaborate in verse, and the former have sometimes been altogether fabricated out of the latter. In our own country it was only when such writing was left to the clergy that it was otherwise. Our earliest histories and chronicles written after the Conquest for popular reading, whether in English or in

French, were all in verse. Such were those of Wace, of Layamon, of Peter de Langtoft, of Robert of Gloucester, and others. Not till we come down to a much latter age have we any histories in prose except those written by the clergy for the use of foreigners and the learned. But the case that may be said most nearly to resemble the present is that of the general transformation of the old metrical romance, both French and English, from verse to prose in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. That change, indeed, was brought about not altogether by the decay of the old power of verse, but partly no doubt by the rise and growth of the new power of prose. Yet both in England and in France a decided declension of literature, and of civilization generally, marked the period in which the change took place.

The present age boasts of a greater number of poetical writers than any other in the history of our literature. Some pages might be filled with their names alone. Never were poetical talent and "the accomplishment of verse" so largely diffused. Nay, more; never before was so much poetry produced of really superior quality as is produced among us at present. Nor, it may be added, of the respectable poetry that is written and published was there ever before so small a portion of only the lowest order of merit. But this is only the natural consequence of the extension of intellectual culture by which the age is distinguished. There is more good poetry written, and less of a very inferior kind, just as the average of every other kind of writing is higher than it ever was before. The same thing is true, indeed, of the ordinary kinds of production in nearly every department of ingenuity and skill, whether mental or manual. Our common pottery is better made than it ever was before as well as our common poetry; even our chairs and our tables are continually getting to be fabricated with more and more perfection of workmanship.

Of much, perhaps of most, of the poetry that has been published within the last thirty years it would be quite unjust not to admit that it has been far above mediocrity. In other words, it has been really poetry, not merely what called itself such. It

has been a true gift of the gods, and a light and joy to men,—as well as more or less satisfactory to the booksellers. It has already made a permanent addition to our literature of large amount and value. And the precious store is continually growing; nor can it be conjectured what heights of song may yet be reached by some one, or two, or three, even of the voices whose earlier music we have already heard.

Nevertheless, it will hardly be disputed that, with all this performance and all this promise, the only really eminent poets that the age can boast of are Tennyson, and Robert Browning, and Elizabeth Barrett Browning.* If there be another, it is Hood, who, indeed, has produced as little as any of his contemporaries that it is likely after-times will be willing to let die. These three or four names are what this age has to set against those of Scott, and Byron, and Campbell, and Crabbe, and Moore, and Wordsworth, and Coleridge, and Southey, and Shelley, and Keats, which adorn the preceding quarter of a century. But even this is a very inadequate statement of the difference. The way in which poetry has for many years past stirred the popular heart has been mostly only by brief lyrical pieces, some half-dozen, perhaps, of which have, indeed, not only made a great immediate sensation but wrought themselves into the memory of all persons who read, one or two of them even into that of many who rarely or never open a book—Songs of the Shirt, Locksley Halls, and others. Only one great poem in the ordinary sense of the expression, Mrs. Browning's Aurora Leigh, has achieved an extensive popularity. Neither Tennyson's In Memoriam nor his Idyls of the King can properly be reckoned as more, either of them, than a collection of so many short poems relating to the same subject. Here then, to be sure, is indeed a sufficiently continuous flow of poetical production. But still there is no growth of a great poetical literature. It is like the succession of wars in

* While these pages are passing through the press the sad intelligence has been received of the death of the authoress of Aurora Leigh, at Casa Guidi, in Florence, where she and her husband had for some years resided, on the morning of Saturday the 29th of June (1861).

which the ingenious political speculator in the magazine has discovered that we have been engaged almost without intermission ever since the year 1815. One distinction, whatever others there may be, of these later wars is, that they have mostly been undistinguished by great battles. No victories of Talavera, of Vittoria, of Leipsic, of Waterloo. The ordinary observation of men, if not history, ignores such wars. To the common understanding, and in common parlance, the time is not a time of war, but a time of peace.

2. The next most remarkable distinction of our present literature is the great preponderance in it of the element of narrative. This character, as we have seen, had at an early stage begun to be assumed by the poetry of the preceding era; and nothing, therefore, could be more natural than that it should show itself strongly in the prose of the present, which has to so large an extent taken the place of that poetry. Accordingly nearly all the writing power that has shown itself among us for some time past of the highest order,—whatever can be said to have given anything of a new eloquence to the language,—has occupied itself chiefly with narrative of one kind or another; Mr. Dickens and Mr. Thackeray (to confine ourselves to writers in prose) with fiction; the late Lord Macaulay and Mr. Carlyle with what is distinctively called history. The only remarkable exception is Mr. Ruskin; even of what the late Thomas de Quincey has left us a considerable portion is in the form of narrative. And then there are the large additions that have been made within the last few years to our classical English historical literature by such works as those of which Mr. Grote's noble History of Greece is the greatest.

3. This predominance of the narrative spirit, again, has naturally brought along with it or helped to produce a further effect which makes a third characteristic of our current literature. Perhaps the kind of writing for which the female genius is best adapted is that of narrative—especially of such narrative as does not demand a rigid adherence either to any particular series of facts or to any particular form of composition, but in its entire freedom from all rules and shackles of every description comes

nearest of all writing to ordinary conversation. Undoubtedly by far the most perfect representation of real life to be found in literature is the modern novel. Far as it may be from any pretension to be regarded as belonging to the highest department of the artistic in writing, it is yet in its capacities of faithful portraiture almost perfect. It is in this respect what photography is to painting. Its artistic shortcomings contribute to its excellence here. Bound to look to nothing whatever except only truth and vividness of representation, it may make its pictures much more exact reproductions of reality than are or can be either those of the poetical epic or those of the drama, or even those of history itself. At the same time, like photography, it by no means refuses all association with art; it only declines to acknowledge the artistic for its first principle, to be guided in all its movements by a regard to that. It claims to be emancipated from any universal subjection to the artistic, as well as from any such necessary subserviency to truth or matter of fact. And, while thus freer than poetry in one way and than history in another, it holds itself entitled to avail itself whenever it chooses of the prerogatives of either. There is nothing, in short, that the novel may not include, as there is nothing that even a good novel may not dispense with except only that spirit of life breathed into it wanting which a book addressing itself to the imagination wants everything.. Moreover, the realm of the novel is the widest in the whole world of artistic literature, and there is no end to the number and diversity of the provinces comprehended in it; so that true narrative and imaginative genius, of whatever kind, is always sure to find somewhere in so ample a range its proper region.

As Maria Edgeworth (born 1767, died 1849) and Jane Austen (born 1775, died 1817) will be generally admitted to have been the first female novelists of the last age, so the late Charlotte Brontë (born 1816, died 1855) and the gifted authoress of Adam Bede, The Mill on the Floss, and Silas Marner, must be held to stand out with equal distinctness in the present from a much more numerous and a much more brilliant assemblage.

Nor is the novel the only department of our prose literature

in which female genius has in our day achieved eminent success. To pass over less remarkable instances, what other pen, wielded by any writer of either sex, has shown itself readier or sharper in true history as well as in fiction, or ranged with more grace as well as versatility over the whole field of social and political speculation, than that of a lady who is well known to have been all the while, and still to be, in such a state of health that this unintermitting mental activity, which would have exhausted a less ardent spirit, would seem to have been what alone has kept her lamp of life from going out?

The effect produced upon the general character of our current literature by this more extended co-operation of the other sex will probably be more discernible to those who shall be able to look back upon it from the distance of a generation or two than it is to ourselves. But some effect there can hardly fail to be. It cannot be the same thing to any department of artistic production whether it is freely entered by both sexes or left to the almost exclusive possession of one of them. It may be, indeed, that the only result of the intermixture in any case will be the growth of two distinct schools, a male one and a female one. So, now that both our prose and our verse of all kinds is the produce of Scotland and Ireland as well as of England, we have yet, perhaps, not one literature combining all that is best in the genius of each of the three countries, but rather three literatures, each having a character of its own or marked by something peculiar to itself.

4. Be this, however, as it may, there is one kind of intermixture or exposure to a new influence, by which it is impossible that a national literature should not be affected. Let there suddenly spring up in a country, under whatever circumstances, a greatly increased study of and familiarity with some foreign literature, and its own can hardly fail to take something of a new form or colour. Literature is of all things the most sympathetic, and it is a necessity of its constitution to be always to some extent imitative in one way or another. The literature of every age is in great part an imitation of that of the immediately pre-

ceding age. That is all that would usually happen if there were only one national literature in the world. That is all that did actually happen for many ages in the case of the literature of ancient Greece: whatever it may have been in its origin, it was completely removed throughout the entire time of its growth, and rise to perfection, from any possibility of being acted upon for better or worse by any other literature. Greek civilization was then the only civilization of the European world, even including under that name the western portion of Asia. With the literature of Rome the case was altogether different; that was almost from its birth to a great extent an imitation of the elder literature of Greece. In other cases, again, one literature has been acted upon by another not constantly or habitually but only at a particular crisis. That is what has happened to our own. At one time, as has been pointed out in a preceding page, we find it more especially reflecting something of that of France, at another something of that of Italy, at another something of that of Germany. It used to be chiefly or almost exclusively in our poetry that this foreign inspiration showed itself. In particular, what of the influence of the modern literature of Germany began to appear in our own in the earlier part of the present century was entirely confined to a certain class or school of our writers in verse. But now, that, in the middle period of the century, prose has, as we have seen, taken the place which in the last age belonged to verse, this latest foreign affection which has seized upon our literature has naturally acquired a much more extended range. Besides this, the peace and our renewed free intercourse with the Continent have no doubt given rise to a greatly more diffused study of and familiarity with foreign literature generally in this country than existed among us at the beginning of the century; so that for one educated Englishman who read German in the last generation there are probably a hundred in the present. And as for the consequences likely to result from the imitation of foreign models, it is not to be forgotten that it is in this way that every considerable modern European literature has been in great part built up; they have all borrowed

more or less largely from one another; no one of them, at any rate, not even the German, for all its boast of a pure barbaric origin, has escaped the influence upon either its outward mould or its inner spirit of the great exemplary literature of the old classic world. Nor, probably, can a literature or a language be permanently debased or in any way injured by so much of any foreign element whatever as it will retain; it will retain nothing which it did not really want, or which it cannot assimilate and convert into an integral part of itself. Least of all can our own English set up any pretensions to the absolute purism which is sometimes held to be the chief virtue that a language can possess. The English, whatever it may have once been, is now at least no longer a maiden language but a married one. It has been that for these last eight centuries, and our literature for all that time has been continually receiving new blood or new life from some other literature. As for the Latin part of the language, which it is common to hear spoken of contemptuously as its foreign element, the alloy of the native gold, it has been largely and freely employed by every one of our great writers, whether in verse or in prose, without a single exception, from Chaucer downwards, but never more largely and freely than by some of the most popular writers of the present day. What would either the prose of Macaulay or the poetry of Tennyson or of Mrs. Browning be without its words of Latin derivation? Then, for Carlyle, with what is popularly regarded as his Germanism both in expression and in thought. There can be no doubt that Mr. Carlyle's is a somewhat peculiar style, and some few of its peculiarities may have been borrowed from the German. But his mind is a strongly original one; and he would certainly have thought and expressed himself in a way of his own if no such thing as the language or literature of Germany had ever been heard of. Let the attempt be made to re-write one of his more characteristic passages in other words and another manner, and the result will probably surprise the sceptical experimenter. It will not be easy to find anything which could be changed for the better or without a loss of part of the meaning or effect

designed to be conveyed. For, unquestionably, a more careful writer, one more attentive to all the minutiæ of expression, is not to be found in the language. And this rapid, elliptical, richly allusive style will be found to be, with all its startling qualities, one of the most exactly grammatical in our literature. In this respect it ranks with that of Sterne and that of Rabelais. Nor is there anything about it of that kind of outlandishness which we find, for instance, in Gibbon, whose numerous violations of our English idiom, it is instructive to remark, have, for all the prestige of his genius, wholly failed in compelling the language to receive them, and have been one and all rejected by it as something that it could not digest or absorb. Carlyle's Germanisms are a thing of a different nature altogether from Gibbon's Gallicisms. Nor, if his flashing narrative may sometimes elude or perplex a dull apprehension, is it ever ambiguous or obscure from any affected and unnatural indirectness such as Gibbon habitually indulges in.

5. Not unnaturally accompanying that last mentioned, but yet distinct from it and by no means its necessary associate, is another characteristic discriminating our present literature from that of the immediately preceding age, which may perhaps be regarded as a more doubtful sign;—its much greater impatience of all old bonds, and the far stronger degree in which it is possessed and animated by the sheer impulse of innovation. Of course, it runs after novelty in the hope or belief that there is to be found in that what is better than anything the ancient ways could lead to. But still what urges it on is in the main a sort of blind passion. It merely feels that "of old things all are over old, of good things none are good enough." The case is like that of a people seized with a passion of emigration. It is true that we cannot dispense with something of this spirit in any department of human affairs. Literature and all other forms of the artistic have also, as well as states and forms of polity, in the natural course of things, their times when much is questioned that had been long universally accepted and submitted to, without which, perhaps, all life would gradually die out from them. "The changes we

have seen in our time," to borrow the clear explanation of a recent thoughtful writer, "are natural to human progress;—excessive addiction for a season to great masters and exemplars, and then a violent revolt against them. A great artist is a man of original genius, who transfuses outward nature with the colour of his own thought and feeling, and then so represents what he sees that it shall appear under the same aspects to other eyes. The crowd of imitators look at nature with his eyes, and adopt his models and procedures as if they were natural objects and processes, so that at length, by convention and tradition, his works and methods are authenticated into canonical types and established truths. But, in consequence of frequent and imperfect copying, with the variations of addition and subtraction made by strong individualities, the models come at last to be but faint shadows of the original thoughts, and much less do they represent the original outward nature. Then arises the necessity for the revolution which our own times have witnessed, and with it the foundation of a school of *naturalisti*."* This is said of the art of painting, and the insurrection which has recently broken out there against both the doctrine and practice of the last three hundred years. But literature is subject to the action of exactly the same process; and, indeed, our literature is actually undergoing it at present as well as its sister art. Fortunately, in such regions no real harm can ever be done by any amount of this kind of agitation and commotion, however revolutionary or heretical. It is not as in a commonwealth, where usually so many material interests must be rudely disturbed, so much of shelter and solid support shaken or laid in ruins, by even the most necessary reformation. The only question, the only thing to be considered, here is whether the new views are true. And that time will very speedily and very conclusively determine. For, again, it is not with art as it is with metaphysics. No artistic doctrine or system can stand, or long continue to find acceptance, which does not, like a tree bearing fruit, prove its soundness by what

* Ten Years. By J. A. Symonds, M.D., &c., 1861, p. 38.

it produces. And nothing really excellent in art can be permanently discredited by any mere violence of denunciation. On the other hand, it is good for every kind of truth to be now and then put upon its defence. A new doctrine may be true, or a new practice right, in part, without being wholly so. It is quite possible, however, that its attraction may lie all in its novelty, which is a quality that will always command a certain amount of temporary attention and admiration. In some things, indeed, novelty is almost all in all; in some, as for instance, in a fashionable article of dress, it is at least absolutely indispensable; the coat or bonnet may have all the other recommendations that could be desired, but without novelty, according to our modern notions, it cannot be fashionable. Still even in such matters there are probably some points, both of convenience and of taste, that have always remained the same, and hardly admit of alteration. In literature mere novelty cannot be admitted to have any legitimate attractiveness whatever. What is ever so old may be just as good as what is ever so new. And, although it is true that, quite distinct as they are, art exists only in virtue of its being a reflection of nature, it does not follow that we always get at the original by turning our backs on the reflection. The school of would-be *naturalisti* may prove to be only a school of *fantastici*. The history of every department of the artistic is crowded with such ambitious enterprises ending in such ludicrous discomfitures. And in literature at least they have, even when headed by men of true genius, as has often also been the case, more frequently perhaps heralded an age of decadence than one of revival. Not that we are to charge the meteoric outbreak with having brought or made the cold ungenial weather by which it was followed. It was no doubt only an indication. But certainly even so brilliant a writer as Tacitus would be more naturally expected towards the close than at the commencement of a great literary era. The transparency and freshness of Herodotus at the dawn—the full and flowing eloquence of Livy, the perfection at once of nature and of art, at the height of the day—the pyrotechnic blaze of Tacitus when the shadows of even-

ing have begun to gather—that would seem to be the appropriate succession. Then, there are two dangers always attendant upon striking into a new path. First, there is the opportunity constantly presenting itself, of achieving at least a present success by mere trickery. Many things that could not be ventured upon in a style professing to be observant of established models may count securely upon being tolerated and admired as being in the very spirit of one which has thrown off all such restraints. Partly, people are really charmed by the false brilliancy; partly, they are ready to take upon trust from a favourite writer much in which they can hardly perceive either any beauty or sometimes even any meaning. Even a man of true and powerful genius may not always write the better for feeling himself thus left entirely to be a law to himself, or lifted above all law (even such as he might have prescribed to himself) by the huzzas of a mob. Secondly, a manner strongly marked by an original and peculiar character is the kind of manner at once the most unsuited for imitation and the most tempting to imitators. It is the easiest of all manners to imitate, and yet the imitation is almost sure to be in the main an extravagance and an absurdity. It is an absurdity, in fact, and worse, in virtue of the very object which it proposes to itself. A new and peculiar style is as much the property of its inventor, of the writer who has first employed it, as anything else that most belongs to him. It is the expression of his mind, and cannot possibly be also the fit expression of yours. It is, in truth, as has been well said, the man himself. Your assumption of it is a piece of arrant dishonesty. It is a thing that would not be done by any one having the slightest respect either for himself or for the rights of his neighbour. You might as well go about mimicking another person's voice and manner of speaking, and pretending to be he. This kind of imitation, indeed, can never be, properly speaking, anything but mimicry. And certainly nothing could give us a livelier illustration than some of the specimens we have had of it, in their contrast with what they would emulate, of the difference between a man and an ape.

6. Lastly, if there be not really more of art in our present literature than there is in that of the last age, there is certainly much more of the appearance, we might almost say the ostentation, of it. We have fallen off decidedly in the art of concealing our art. Byron has said of two of his heroines, that the difference between them—

"Was such as is between a flower and gem;"

but the general difference between the most highly finished poetry of the last and of the present age might rather be compared to that between a natural flower and an artificial one. The latter is possibly a very elaborate and perfect piece of workmanship; there may be an exactness in what is cut in ivory which is never found in nature. But, as Burke has observed, "it is the nature of all greatness not to be exact." The poetry of Virgil is more exact than that of Homer; but the Æneid is not therefore a greater poem than the Iliad. It may be doubted if some of the most remarkable poetry of the last age would have found any acceptance at all if it had been produced in the present. What would have been thought of Crabbe, for instance, with his habitual carelessness both of rhyme and of grammar, and his innumerable passages, not unfrequently of considerable length, which evidently have not received any dressing whatever? Nay, what reception would some of our old poetry have had of far greater renown than his? The steady progress we have been making towards more and more of mere grammatical correctness for more than a century must, indeed, be obvious to every student of our literature; but it may occasion some surprise to find how far we have advanced in that direction in the course of a single generation. Or, if we would measure the change that the lapse of two generations has made, we may compare Burke and Macaulay. The freedom of Burke's style in all his more characteristic writings would be altogether strange and startling in a writer of the present day. It is something that we have either lost or laid aside. We have, in fact, outgrown it. Whether we have thereby been gainers or losers may be a question. It

is common to assume that the greater regularity of our present style is an evidence of our literature having got past its manhood and entered upon its old age. But correctness is not in itself a defect. It has been always the reproach of our English literature with other nations that it has so little, if it have anything at all, to boast of which is at the same time of great excellence and free from great faults. We ourselves may hold, perhaps, that this comparative lawlessness with which our literature is charged is only a thing of the same kind with the spirit of freedom which animates our political institutions. Still it is impossible to found any system either of art or of politics upon the principle of insubordination. Wherever rules exist, they exist to be obeyed, not to be violated or neglected. And strength is always most shown in conforming to law, not in disregarding it. It never can be admitted, therefore, that it is better for any age to write incorrectly than correctly,—although it may be only a declining age that will make correctness its first aim. For it is a kind of excellence the utmost possible degree of which is soon reached; and what alone makes it of any value is its combination with higher things. Our literature was never so generally distinguished by elaborateness of finish as it is at the present day; but the perfection of its workmanship does not look so much a part of itself as in the best specimens of the last age. The secret by which that effect was attained seems to be lost. Even where the faultlessness is as complete in Tennyson as it is in Shelley, the spontaneousness, or semblance of spontaneousness, which charms us in Shelley is wanting. The art, exquisite as it is, is no longer the same true counterpart and wonderful rival of nature.

Such appear to be the chief essential differences. Others that might be noticed are rather of external circumstances; such as the extension of Criticism, of Journalism, and of Anonymous writing. These three things naturally go together, and they had all attained considerable growth in the last age; but they have been much more largely developed in the present. In no

preceding time, in our own or in any other country, has Anonymous Periodical Criticism ever acquired nearly the same ascendancy and power. It might be interesting to consider how and in how far, if at all, our literature may be likely to be thereby affected, whether in its actual state or in its tendencies and prospects. As for the Anonymity, however, which might seem to be the most important of the three combined elements, it is for the greater part only formal. Of writing the authorship of which is really unknown there probably never was less than there is in the present day. And the custom according to which the name of the writer is withheld in certain cases is obviously one of great convenience. More especially, it is indispensable for any free criticism touching living persons in regard to such points as are never discussed with or in the presence of a man himself in ordinary society. Not, indeed, that the necessary boldness and effrontery, or honesty, if you will, might not be forthcoming in abundance under a system which allowed no public writer to assume a mask or a veil; but that the proceeding would outrage our notions of common decency and common humanity. The only way in which the truth, all the truth, and nothing but the truth can be spoken in the case supposed is by means of a voice, which is no doubt that of an individual, and may even be perfectly well known to be that of a certain individual, but yet does not offensively proclaim itself as such, nay rather claims to be taken for that of nobody in particular. The old proverb would have us say nothing but what is good, nothing but what is complimentary, of the dead: *De mortuis nil nisi bonum;* but in point of fact it is rather of the living that we usually speak under that restriction. Neither, besides, is it easy often to make up one's mind about even the greatest man while he is still running his course. He dazzles you, or he eludes you. Not till the night of death has closed upon him does any calm and clear observation of him become practicable. The stars themselves are invisible in the daytime.

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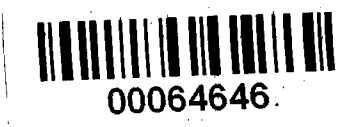
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